BRITANNIA and EVE

SEPTEMBER, 1953

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BRITANNIA and EVE

VOL. 47 No. 3 SEPTEMBER, 1953

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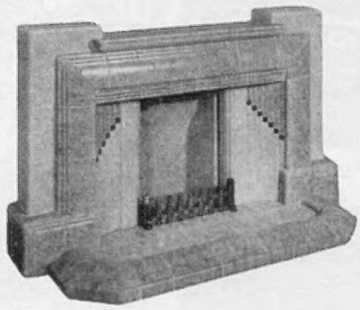

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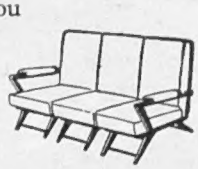

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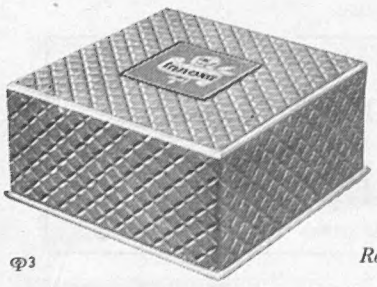

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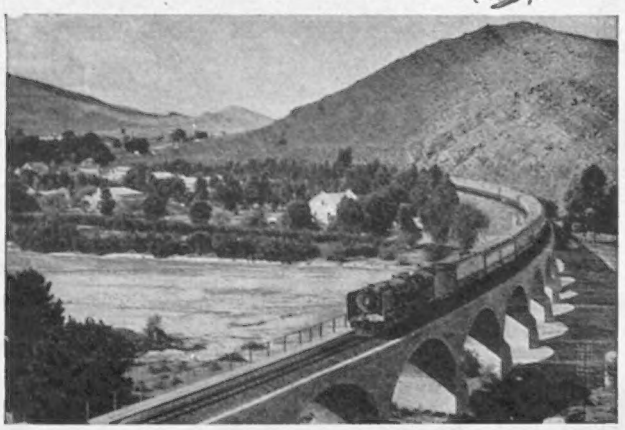

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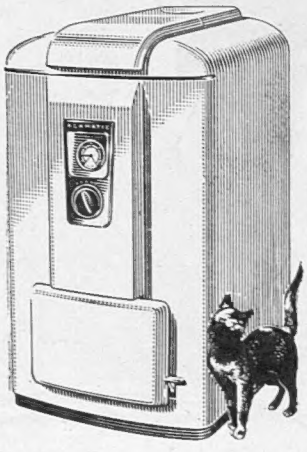

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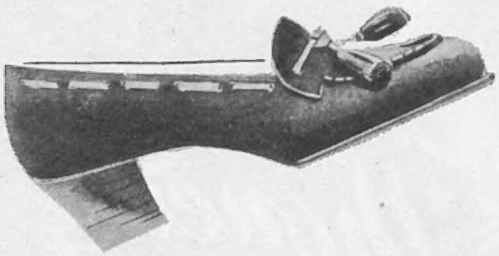

CARESS
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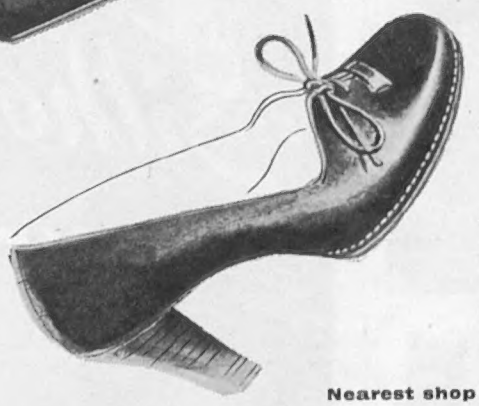

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For My Thoughts

By HILARY FULLER.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY S. TRESILIAN.

I THOUGHT I knew all about Henry Copeland's ten-year-old problem child before that summer evening on the South Bank when he asked me to marry him. That evening he went over it all again. I had known, a fortnight before, during his last visit to London, that he was in love with me. Nevertheless, when I met his train at Waterloo in the afternoon, I realised that he was still uncertain. I guessed then that Henry loved his daughter enough to sacrifice his own happiness for hers.

But I loved Henry enough to believe that there were no difficulties which our love could not overcome. When the concert was over, and we stood together on the promenade, looking out over the Thames, I put it to him quite plainly that the problem was not insoluble.

"You see, Henry, it 's as if Penny has locked herself in a dark room and thrown away the key. Someone has got to break in and rescue her."

"The trouble is that she loved her mother so much, Rosemary," Henry said slowly. "Although it 's two years ago now, she 's never really reconciled herself to Elaine's death. She would bitterly

We stood together on the promenade, looking out over the Thames, and I put it to him quite plainly that the problem was not insoluble.

resent anyone—well—taking her mother's place. She 's so sensitive and I suppose I 'm a little afraid."

The words came out before I could stop them : " Henry—do you love me ? "

I watched the muscles of his bronzed, open face tauten ; his eyes, which had been wandering along the line of the river, fixed on a stationary barge ; his throat rippled, as if he were swallowing down a strong emotion ; his grip on the promenade railings tightened until his knuckles showed white.

" I think I 've loved you from the moment I first saw you," he said in a tight voice. " For weeks I haven't been able to work properly for thinking about you. If it hadn't been for Penny I 'd have asked you to marry me long ago."

" I love you, and I want to help Penny," I whispered. " If you 'll let me try, I think I can."

For a moment he was silent, and then he turned to me, his lips quivering with emotion.

" Rosemary, after Elaine died I thought I should never be able to look at another woman. But you 've proved me wrong. I love you so much that I don't think that I can live without you. Darling—will you marry me . . . ? "

I had not then met Penny, who lived with her father and a housekeeper in two converted coastguard's cottages on the Dorset coast, where Henry wrote his famous novels. He came to town frequently to see his publishers in Bloomsbury. That was how I had first met him, the week after I started working as a secretary to one of the partners.

SHORTLY after we became engaged he wrote to tell me that he was bringing Penny to London to meet me the following week-end. I had suggested that our first meeting should be away from the house that for Penny must be full of memories that would invite comparisons at every corner. He told me that he had broken the news to Penny. He seemed surprised that she had taken it so calmly.

" She showed very little reaction," he wrote. " But I think that since then she 's been crying a lot—at least, her pillow has been wet every morning."

I met their train at Waterloo. Few people seemed to be travelling, and standing at the barrier I had no difficulty in picking out Henry and his daughter at the far end of the platform.

Penny was taller than I imagined—thinner also. She walked with a curious hesitancy, as if she felt that the surface of the platform was hostile. Straw-coloured hair done neatly in pigtails. As they drew nearer I was looking at the unformed, monkey face of any girl of that age.

Henry saw me, and waved. I waved back. Henry nudged Penny and I waved a second time and gave Penny a special smile. For a moment I thought Penny was not going to acknowledge it, and then, in response to a second nudge, she lifted her free hand in a nondescript gesture.

After Henry had kissed me I turned to Penny and greeted her. It was then that I saw her eyes for the first time. They were set very wide apart. They were luminous and brown. It struck me that they were the sort of eyes that, when Penny grew to womanhood, might drive men mad. But when they met mine there was an expression about them that took me off my guard—a hostile challenge that belied the passive set of her features.

" How do you do," Penny said tonelessly, and she held out her small hand.

I took the hand and squeezed it gently. Lying in my own it seemed so tiny that I could not connect it with the almost adult enmity that I had glimpsed in the child's eyes.

" You must be tired after your journey," I said. " We 'll take a taxi to the hotel, and then we 'll have some tea."

IN the taxi, while I chatted to Henry on neutral subjects, Penny stared glumly out of the window, apparently unmoved by the great city that bustled around us. Several times we tried to bring her into the conversation, pointing out buildings and monuments to her, without managing to engage her interest.

We spent the evening in the hotel lounge, and I very soon began to realise how difficult my task was going to be. I seemed unable to make any contact with Penny. Reaching out for her, I met only a smooth surface that slipped at once from my grasp. Shortly before eight o'clock, Henry announced Penny's bedtime.

" I 'll come up with you, Penny," I said, determined to take any opportunity that might enable me to come to grips with her.

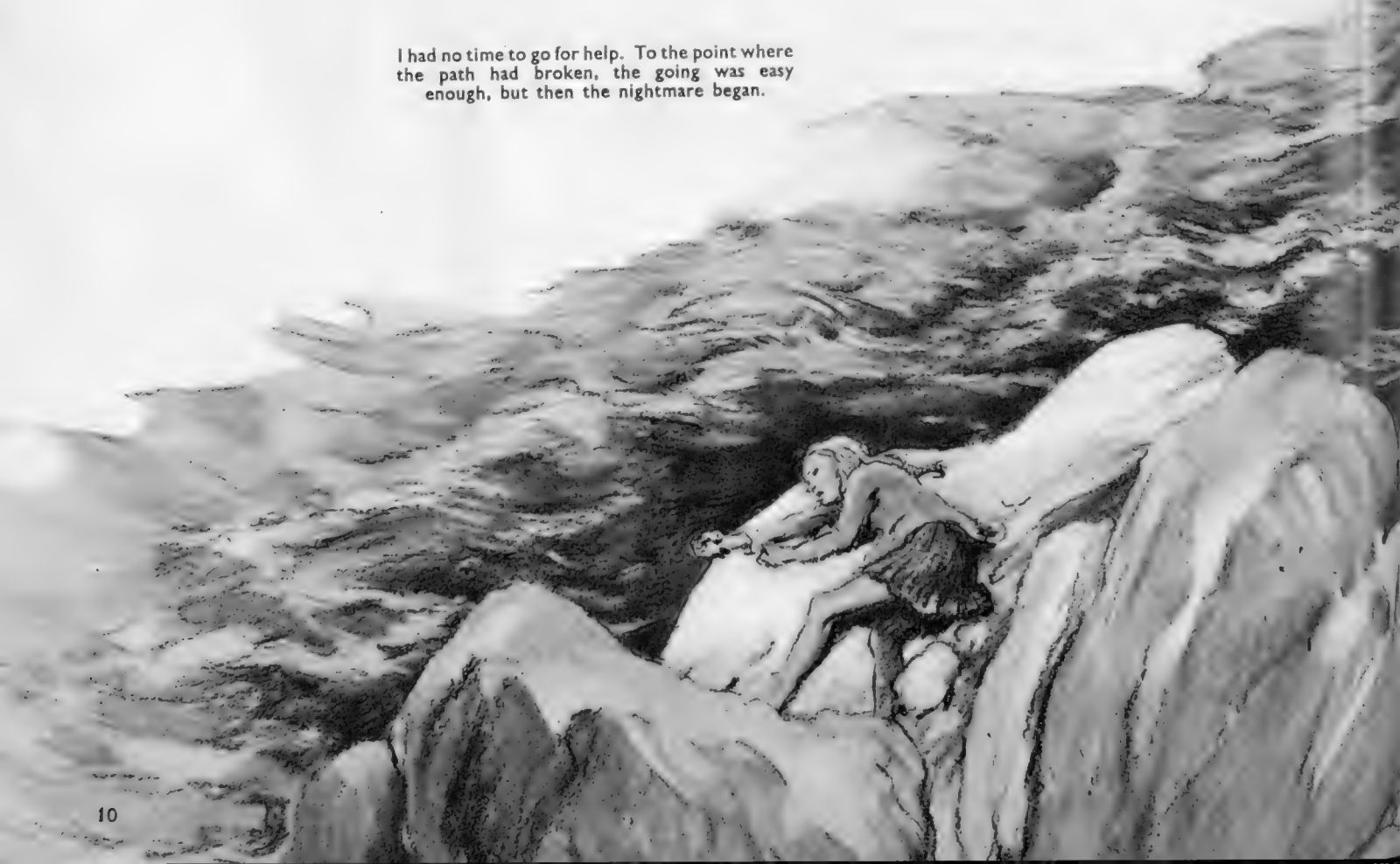
I followed her to her bedroom. Her case stood by the bed. Opening it, she took out her sponge-bag.

" May I unpack for you while you 're washing ? " I asked.

She turned at the door that led to the bathroom, and looked at me, uncertainly.

" If you want to," she said at last, and then, after a deliberate pause : " Thank you."

I unpacked the few things in the case. At the bottom I found a framed



I had no time to go for help. To the point where the path had broken, the going was easy enough, but then the nightmare began.

photograph of a woman with beautiful eyes. I took it to the light and examined it, curiously. I was still looking at it when Penny returned. Almost rudely she took it from my hands.

"That 's my mummy!"

I nodded. "She was very beautiful, wasn't she?" I looked at Penny carefully. "You 're going to resemble her when you grow up, you know. You want that, don't you?"

"I want to be like her in every way," Penny said simply.

She sat before the dressing-table, and began to unplait her hair. I stood behind her, and took the other plait in my hands.

"Used your mother to do it like this?"

IT was then that I saw in the mirror the expression on Penny's face. Her teeth were clenched, and her face was like that of some small animal in pain. Suddenly she jerked the plait from my hand.

"No . . ." she whispered. "Mummy did it like this," she got out at last, in a voice that sounded like a sob.

I felt shocked. Too late I realised that I had trodden upon sacred ground. I judged that to say more might only make things worse, so while Penny finished her hair and undressed, I looked out of the window. Not until I heard her climbing into bed did I turn round. She looked utterly defenceless, lying there. I felt a quick rush of pity for her, bent forward, and pressed my lips gently against her forehead.

Her face became quite expressionless, and she closed her eyes. She might easily have been asleep, but I knew that it would be a long time before she slept. Before that, I guessed that the little face would contort in pain, and the pillow become wet with tears.

THE next day was not a success either. By the afternoon I realised that I was no nearer to Penny than I had been the previous day. They were returning home by the evening train. After tea, Penny was sent to her room to prepare for the journey, and I was able to talk to Henry alone. Suddenly I felt weary and very depressed.

"It hasn't been a good day, has it, darling?" I sighed.

He shook his head and took my hand. "I 'm sorry, it must have been a great disappointment for you."

"For you too."

He nodded. "I think I 've been hoping for too much from to-day. You see, I can't conceive of anyone not liking you—least of all my own daughter."

"You 're not regretting having asked me to marry you?"

He seemed startled. "I love you, darling."

I felt perplexed. Somehow the situation seemed to be getting out of hand. During the previous twenty-four hours our relationship had undergone a subtle change, and I knew it. Above all, we had to be sincere with each other.

"You see, dear," I explained, "I 'm trying to be realistic. We 're not the same with each other when Penny 's around, acting as she does. I thought that perhaps, now you 've seen us together, you might feel that I shan't be able to cope with Penny as I promised I would be able to do—that I might eventually fail. We 're going to be married in two months, and we shall all have to live together. If I did fail and we were married, you 'd be desperately unhappy, wouldn't you?"

It was some moments before Henry replied, and when he spoke he did not answer my question.

"Would you be desperately unhappy, too?" he asked.

Searching my own mind I realized why he had not answered me. Why I, in turn, could not answer him. If Penny continued to feel as she did we would become two different people—strangers. Suddenly I (*Continued on page* 60)

I bent over her and placed my hand on her forehead. She opened her eyes—there was no animosity in them now—only a far-away tranquillity.

MIDGES & MIRAGES

BY ANTHONY CARSON

I WENT to see a festival in France. It took place in the Camargue, the flat, marshy country south of Arles, and was mainly devoted to gipsies, who congregate there to honour their patron saint, Sarah, the maidservant of Mary, the sister of the Virgin. The headquarters of the ceremony is a little seaside town called Les-Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer.

I had difficulty about accommodation, but eventually found a room in a house kept by a retired lighthouse keeper and his wife. The room was a disused kitchen filled with an extraordinary bed like a coffin. Owing to the premium on living space during the festival, I had to pay four hundred francs a night, and eat out at a restaurant.

Another visitor, a young Dutchman, had been lent the use of their stable. He had hitch-hiked from Italy, and was down to his last thousand francs, and seemed to be living on oranges. Monsieur Tessin, the lighthouse keeper, was kind to him and Madame Tessin filled him up with bean stew. He was supposed to be studying law, and had run away from Amsterdam to escape from being an intellectual. While he ate his stew, dressed like a Provençal fisherman, but sporting a wispy academic beard, he discussed the works of Graham Greene whom he greatly admired.

THE house was full of babies, grandsons of the Tessins, who were left there by their daughters-in-law.

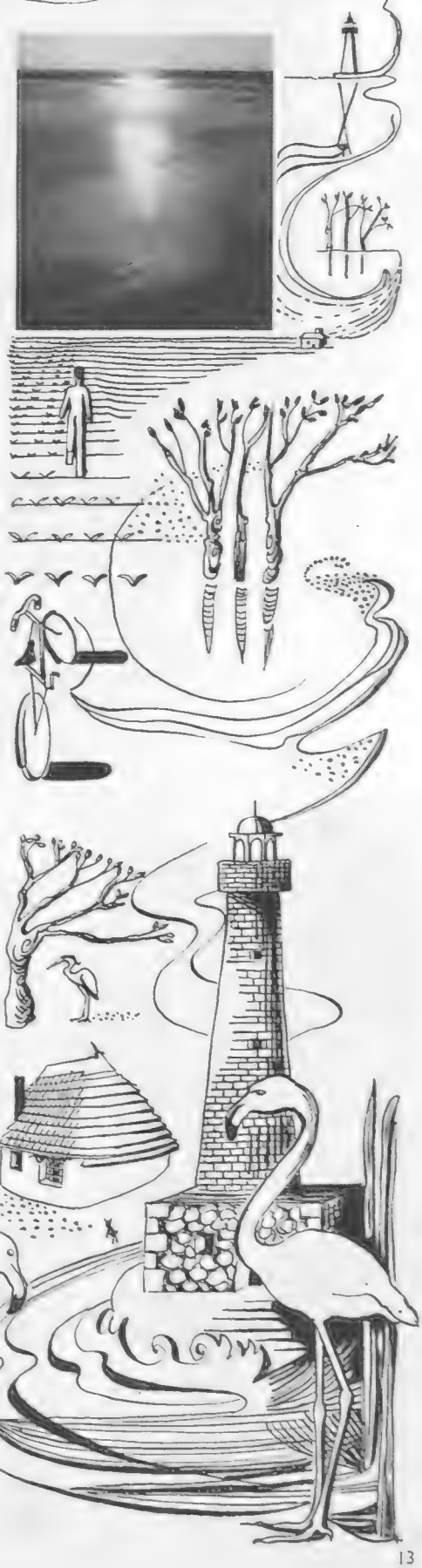
All the male Tessins had been, are, or are destined to be lighthouse keepers. The two Tessin sons were in charge of lighthouses miles away near a raised road called the Digue. In order not to go mad, in that sandy solitude, the wives came in to Les-Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer and deposited their children in the arms of Madame Tessin, while they gallivanted about the town. The result was constant, protracted noise. I had never heard anything like it, and it was continually augmented by other noises.

The Tessins could not hold the most ordinary conversation together without shouting. At first I used to rush into their living-room to stop obvious murder. But they were merely discussing the price of veal, or comparing their grandchildren's undergarments. They had lived together in a lighthouse for ten years, and had got used to filling their world with noise. I had frequent proof that they loved each other dearly, even when Madame Tessin yelled "cracked old boot" to her husband.

Then there was the quite hysterical church service relayed from about fifteen loudspeakers scattered through the town, punctuated with organ music, shouts and bells. All night, just outside our door, a brass band played dance music to a thousand screaming holidaymakers in the square. The drum made a noise like a secret weapon, and the sound of the trumpet bounced from the sky and woke the dead in the cemetery. But the bawling of the children was worse than anything.

"GO and see our sons," shouted Monsieur Tessin to me, one day. "See how well we live in our lighthouses." By this time I had become one of the family. They had reduced the rent to one hundred francs a day. They screamed at me, and I had begun to shout myself. So I set out for one of the lighthouses on foot. It was about eight miles away.

The raised road ran along by the sea and then turned inland. After walking any distance in the Camargue one gets swallowed up. At first it is rather frightening, but later on there is something (*Continued on page 72*)



PLAQUES for

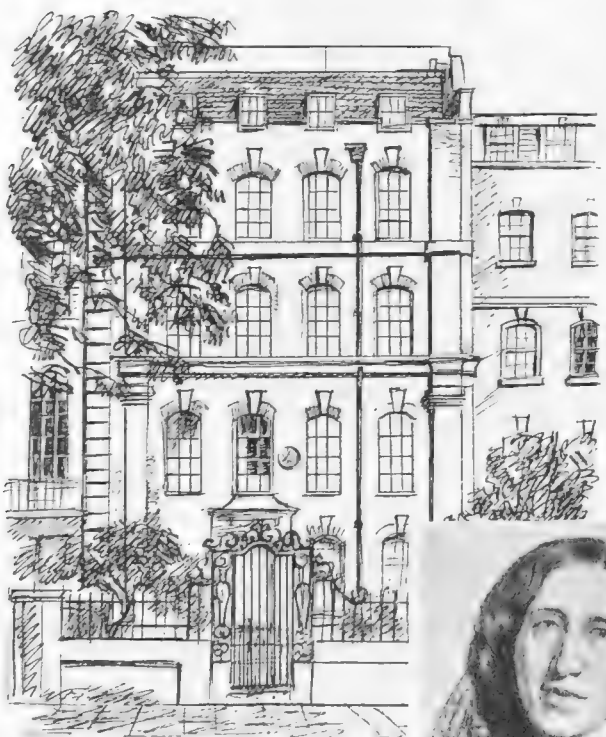
by DOREEN GORSKY

DOTTED about on the houses of London are the plaques which turn houses into monuments, and make a walk around town a romantic delight for the imaginative. These monuments are no preserve of the men, for women of fame and ill-fame are well represented.

High up on Windmill Hill, in the old village of Hampstead, is tall, narrow Bolton House, which Joanna Baillie, the dramatist, called "my country cottage." It was built with the houses which flank it, about 1720. Joanna Baillie and her sister went to live there in 1806 and remained until 1851. Across the green lies the house on which George Romney spent £3,000 before he deserted

No. 180 Ebury Street, where Mozart lived during his stay in this country as a child

Mrs. Patrick Campbell lived and entertained the élite of her own era at No. 33 Kensington Square



No. 4 Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, home of George Eliot for a very brief spell

Posterity

No. 11 Kensington Square, the home of the Duchess of Mazarin

it in 1799. On the brow of the hill on the third side of the triangle, where the ugly Victorian physicist laboratory now stands, there was a beautiful Elizabethan manor house.

Joanna Baillie violated many of the principles of drama, but showed great skill in the way she drew her characters. Her play, *De Montfort*, was performed at Drury Lane in 1800, with Mrs. Siddons and Kemble, and later by Kean in 1821. Mrs. Siddons is said to have lived in a house nearby, now the home of Marghanita Laski. With Wordsworth, Scott and others, she no doubt formed part of the society which Joanna Baillie gathered around her.

In Lockhart's *Life Of Scott*, Joanna Baillie is described as "small in figure with a mean and shuffling gait, but with none of the unpleasantness common to literary ladies."

On Windmill Hill, Hampstead, stands Bolton House, home of Joanna Baillie, author and playwright

A near neighbour to Joanna Baillie from 1846 was Kate Greenaway, the illustrator of children's books, who lived at 39 Frognal. The plaque commemorating her is bordered with coloured flowers as a fitting tribute.

Bolton House is now the home of a young architect, Michael Beasley, and his wife who teaches art, and their two small boys. In the long, narrow front garden all the children of the neighbourhood congregate. The garden at the back was separated from the house in 1931 and together with the studio built in it now forms a separate dwelling. The Beasley's have made themselves a private hideout on the third floor from one of whose windows there is a glimpse between the trees and roofs over the rest of London. The house is simply furnished as befits a cottage. The walls are of plain painted wood panelling which seems to be of only a single thickness between the three houses. Modern plumbing provides new hazards, for the noise of splashing bathwater tells the occupants of one house of the ablutions taking place in the other. "It's no use quarrelling in the bathroom," said Mrs. Beasley, "everyone would know about it."

KENSINGTON SQUARE is an area of London which seems to have attracted the great and the interesting as a place in which to live. It, too, has its share of famous women. Mrs. Patrick Campbell lived at No. 33 with a staff of four, entertaining extensively in a delightful ground floor room overlooking the square. Today her dining-room is nursery for Caroline, daughter of the present tenants, Major and Mrs. Adams, who find respite from tours of army duty abroad, in building up a well documented record of their famous predecessor.

The house, built in 1690 and refaced in 1790, has a delightfully proportioned square-fronted façade. It is not an unduly tall house, although Mrs. Campbell in one of her letters, describes the unexpected arrival of Sarah Bernhardt to stay with her, and (*Continued on page* 65)

Subject to Contract

by

KATHERINE BETTS

"WE'VE got our cottage," we told our friends excitedly. "Once we're in you must come for a weekend. The guest room has a wonderful view."

The congratulations followed, but amongst them we detected a note of caution. "It's all settled, you've signed the contract?" the more knowledgeable asked. We said no, but that was just a matter of form, wasn't it? We'd paid the deposit and had the place surveyed. The contract should be ready in two or three weeks, and it took a month after that for "completion." Allow another month, say, for the builders and we should be able to move well before Christmas. Christmas in the country had always been our dream. What about their coming to eat roast goose with us then? Our own goose, of course!

That was August, 1952, and we're still town-dwellers, though that first cottage is now past history. The funny part is, we thought we had been so methodical and taken care of every possible contingency.

We liked the cottage on sight, but though the senior partner decided it seemed well built, we weren't going to rush in. On our second visit we took a surveyor. Better to have expert opinion *before* deciding whether to make an offer. When the verdict was favourable we felt on top of the world. True, there were snags, but that was inevitable. The mains electricity was a blessing though extra power points would be necessary. Mains water would have been preferable, but the well was electrically pumped, and never ran dry, we were assured. The "modern country house drainage," as the agents coyly put it, was above reproach; a new and adequate septic tank. Nothing to worry about there.

Back at home we went through it all soberly. Building, drainage, water, electricity, all checked. Telephone? We had learned that the words "telephone at present connected" gave no guarantee that we could take over the installation. A query to local headquarters put our minds at rest. The number could be transferred to us. "We'd better make sure that the local council haven't allocated the field opposite for a refuse dump or a housing estate," the senior partner suggested. The cottage was set in the midst of its own sizeable garden, orchard and paddock, and surrounded by farm lands, so there seemed no chance of unwelcome "development," but it paid to be certain. Another long distance phone call, this time to the Rural District Council Surveyor and Planning Officer. No, the council had no plans for the area. It was scheduled as agricultural land. That was safe! Do you wonder we made our offer, waited breathlessly for the reply; engaged in a little further bartering, and finally sent off our deposit with the virtuous feeling that *nothing* had been left to chance?

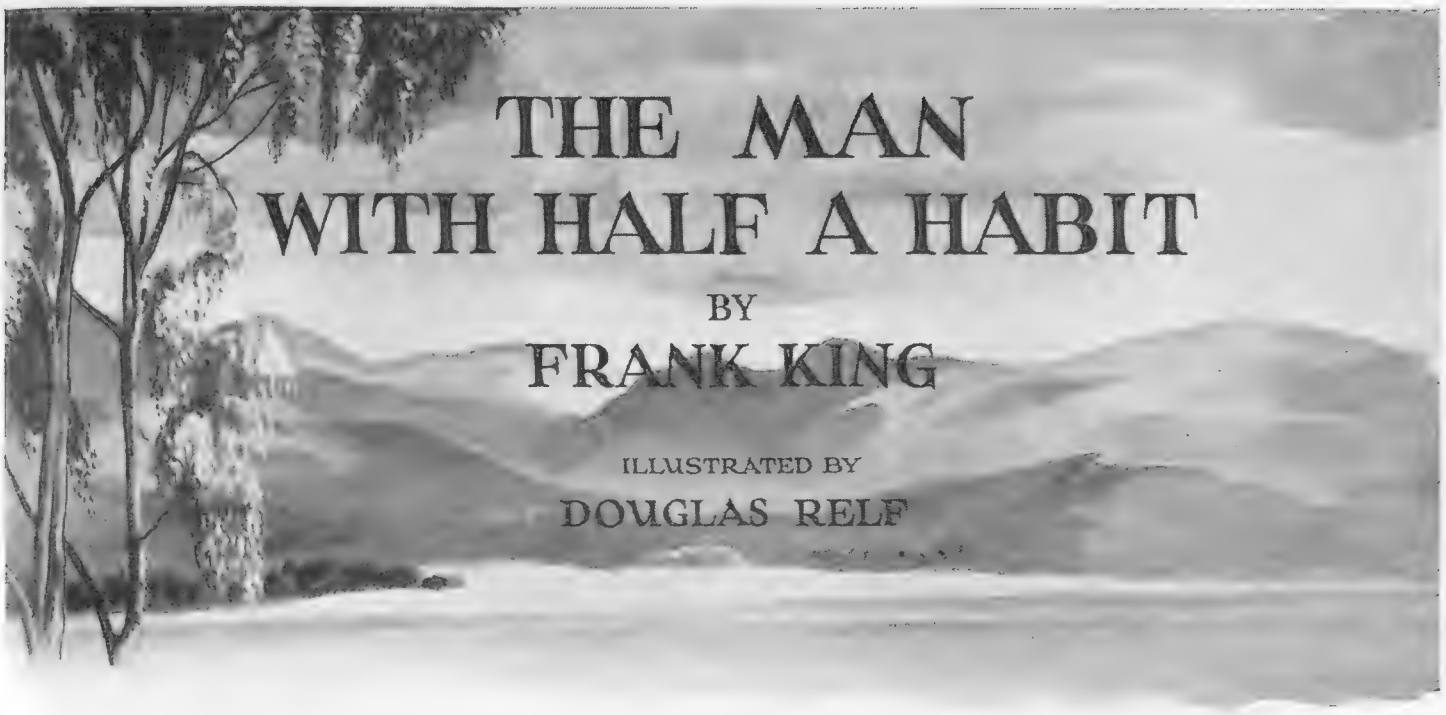
The first shock came when our solicitor wrote to tell us that ours was the liability for "stock-proof fences" all round the property. The road frontage side had a hedge; overgrown in parts, gappy in others. The rest was wire with chestnut palings. Expert examination revealed rotten posts, sagging wire. It was an extra liability we hadn't bargained for, but it wouldn't break us. Then did we plan to put any building within 220 feet from the middle of the road; or construct any means of access to or from the road? Because, under the Ribbon Development Act, we couldn't; not without the consent of the Highway Authority. Well, this might prove a difficulty, but we were prepared to take the risk.

BUT that wasn't all. The nearest neighbours, a pair of farm cottages up the lane, had the right to drain the overflow from their cesspool, if any, on to our land. Again the experts were called in. There had been no trouble in the immediate past, but a tell-tale crop of stinging nettles betrayed where a soakaway was once active. No unpleasantness might ever occur, but the lie of the land, and the position of the well, made us pause. Regretfully we decided not to proceed. We consoled ourselves with the thought that something even more attractive would soon turn up.

Once again advertisements were studied; letters to agents written; long cross-country journeys made. Our wants sounded very simple. We weren't choosy about architectural style or age, though we barred thatch, exposed beams on which a six-foot man would strike his head, and a wooden or asbestos structure.

With those reservations, all we asked (*Continued on page 70*)

Buying a dream cottage is not just a matter of finding it. Given what appears to be the ideal property, there may still be valid reasons for not acquiring the most "desirable residence"



THE MAN WITH HALF A HABIT

BY

FRANK KING

ILLUSTRATED BY

DOUGLAS RELF

IT was quite by accident that Peter Trevor made the acquaintance—rather late in the day, it is true—of the Man With Half a Habit. Though a glutton for work, there are occasions when Peter goes on strike, and resolutely turns his back on the post-mortem room, the Home Office and Scotland Yard. He packs up the treasured fishing-rod with which he seldom has much success, and takes it with him to some hideout in the country. He was staying in Ambleside with his old friend Doctor George Howitt at the time he met Colonel Charles Aldin.

The meeting could hardly be called convivial. A few hours earlier the Colonel had been glimpsed bobbing about in Lake Windermere. The Coroner had decided that an autopsy was necessary, and had instructed Doctor Howitt to perform same. It was only natural that Howitt should invite the maestro to assist him; so natural that Peter couldn't very well refuse.

"Busman's holiday," he commented ruefully as he took his seat in Howitt's car.

"Too bad," smiled Howitt. "But I'm not going to miss the opportunity of seeing you at work."

"At least give me a cigarette."

"In the cubby-hole."

"Thanks. I'm always leaving mine behind." Once the cigarette was alight, Peter's training began to assert itself. "Tell me something about our departed friend. A local resident?"

"No, he's from London."

"Identified pretty quickly, wasn't he?"

"THERE were papers in his pocket. And the police have a circularized description of him. He's been missing from his home for a week. Looks like suicide, don't you think?"

"I wouldn't know." Peter himself had a habit—a whole and complete habit—which could be torture to his colleagues. When thinking deeply he was apt to whistle, softly, almost tunelessly, some Scots air. Just now he produced something which was recognizable as "Annie Laurie" only because of its familiarity. "What's he been doing up here?"

"Your guess is as good as mine."

"Anything else you can tell me?"

"No." Howitt smiled again. "You sound interested."

"I am. Folks who disappear from home and are found dead three hundred miles away always interest me."

THERE are occasions when Peter goes on strike, packs up his treasured fishing-rod and takes it with him to some hideout in the country

The road ran alongside the lake, affording a wonderful view of the wooded fells on the other side. It is doubtful whether Peter saw any of them—or even the tiny wavelets glittering in the sunshine. He was still busy with "Annie Laurie." His cigarette smouldered unnoticed between his fingers.

At the mortuary the local inspector in charge of the case was awaiting them. He had been on the phone with London, and had news for them.

"It's suicide all right, gentlemen," he said. "A letter arrived at his home by the midday delivery, stating his intention of doing away with himself. It was posted in Windermere yesterday."

"Any obvious reason for suicide?" asked Peter.

"He'd some kind of heart trouble, sir. Both painful and incurable, I understand."

"Angina, perhaps. Might be. Anything of interest in his luggage?"

"We haven't found out yet where he was staying."

"Take some time, I suppose. Could be an isolated farmhouse anywhere. Though you'd expect someone to have reported the fact that he hadn't returned. Thanks, Inspector. Where is he?"

"This way, sir."

UNDER the bright lights in the post-mortem room Peter looked down at all that was left of Colonel Charles Goldin. An elderly man, still with a good figure, though almost painfully thin. Quite a pleasant face, he thought.

"There's one thing we can say at once,"

he asserted. "He didn't die of drowning."

Howitt was startled. "You mean——"

"Heart failure. No sign of asphyxia."

"Dead before he entered the water? Lord! That sounds like——"

"Steady, George! Remember the shock of immersion—if he had heart trouble. Could cause instant death, so that no water would enter the lungs. Let's see, shall we?"

It did not take long to ascertain that Peter was right. A very thorough investigation followed. There were no marks of violence on the body, nothing internal which could have caused death except an obviously diseased heart.

"So that's that," said Howitt, rather disappointed that the case had proved so simple. "He intended to drown himself, but the shock killed him first?"

"Looks that way," agreed Peter. "Unless analysis shows the presence of some obscure poison—which hardly seems likely. Not an altogether satisfactory case at present. He's been dead less than twenty-four hours. I'd like to know what he's been doing during the past week. Perhaps we'll get a clue to that when the police trace——" He stopped short in the act of peeling off his rubber gloves. "Noticed his hands, George?"

"What about them?"

"The fingernails. Badly bitten. But only on the left hand. It's a disgusting habit. Far too prevalent. But I've never known anyone before with only half of it."

"Crikey, yes! Those on the right hand are quite long. Do you really think——"

"Difficult to believe that a man would bite the nails of one hand only—unless something prevented him getting at the other. Perhaps some deformity of the elbow or shoulder. . . . We'd better make sure."

They made sure. Nothing of the sort was present. But the detailed examination disclosed slight traces of bruising round the right wrist, so faint that they had been overlooked on the earlier, more cursory inspection.

"Mean anything to you?" asked Howitt.

"Might do," said Peter thoughtfully. For a few moments he produced something remotely resembling "The Bluebells Of Scotland." Then he shrugged, "Yes, I'd better phone through to the Yard at once. And I'm afraid, George, I'll have to cut my holiday short."

LATE that same night Chief Inspector Jamieson, dour and grizzled, listened to the story with close attention.

"You have me puzzled, Mr. Trevor," he complained. "I don't get it."

"You will—I hope," smiled Peter. "The trouble is that you always want everything signed, sealed and delivered, so you'll have to wait until I've dug up some proof for you. Done what I asked?"

"Of course."

"Good. Let's hear the background. In detail."

As requested on the telephone Jamieson had collected all available information. He started at the beginning. Colonel Goldin had been a chief constable in the Midlands until his heart trouble compelled an early retirement. He had come to live in London, in a pleasant house overlooking Tooting Common, where he amused himself by writing articles and books on criminology, in which he was intensely interested.

"Had he any associations with the Lake District?" interrupted Peter.

"Not to my knowledge. But his housekeeper had. She was born in Troutbeck."

"Interesting. Tell me about her."

"She's a fine-looking woman. About forty. Name of Sybil Walton. She was a nurse, and attended to Goldin when he went into a home for treatment. Impressed him so much that he asked her to keep house for him. About five years ago. Nothing improper, of course. In fact, she's more or less engaged to marry a doctor in Tooting. But Goldin evidently thought a lot about her. He left a will in her favour. And his letters to her—— But I'll show you those when I come to them."

Just over a week ago Sybil Walton had notified the local police late at night that Colonel Goldin was missing. He had gone up to town that morning to consult some reference books (*Continued on page* 66)

PETER paused. There was no trace of emotion on Sybil Walton's face. Jamieson was watching anxiously

Mrs. ELLA GASKING, O.B.E.

She Banished

KAY SMALLSHAW tells the heartening story of a woman's flair in the transformation of our railway refreshment rooms

ELLA GASKING, O.B.E., sat at her desk in her spacious new office and read a newspaper article roundly condemning the railway refreshment rooms. "A cup of wish-wash" was the description given the tea That was in June, 1950, on the very day that the slim, auburn-haired Yorkshirewoman, who had built up a small family pea-canning business into a gigantic concern with a turnover of several million pounds a year, took over her appointment as a full-time member of the Hotels Executive—the only woman to hold such a position on a government Board.

There are two full-time members and a part-time chairman of the Hotels Executive, the branch of the mammoth British Transport Commission handling all the catering of nationalised British Railways. Its responsibilities include hotels, saloons on steamers and railway refreshment cars as well as the hundreds of station refreshment rooms and buffets all over Great Britain that are Mrs. Gasking's most immediate concern. Do you wonder that when she read that criticism three years ago, the immensity of the task ahead appalled her?

For though we have all known pleasant refreshment rooms and some main line termini at which a reasonable standard was maintained, in general, the railway refreshment room with its petrified buns and wilted sandwiches has been nothing but a bad joke. During the war things descended to a new "low." Out-of-date premises grew drearier and more out-of-date.

WITH the postwar nationalisation of the railways the necessity of raising the standard of catering and amenities was fully realized, but there were so many other urgent problems clamouring for attention. By June, 1950, as Mrs. Gasking read that scathing article, little had been done.

Mrs. Gasking, like all successful executives, values criticism. If you or I were to write a letter commenting on refreshment service or facilities it would be answered the same day and carefully investigated. That first week she spent every evening at refreshment counters sampling the tea and coffee. "No one knew me then, it was easy," she told me with the warm smile that starts at her lips but goes right on to her eyes. I can see her taking in every detail as she asked at one counter why a spoon attached to a long string was handed to her to stir the coffee and then dipped into a jug of hot water before being offered to the next customer. Pilferage is still a problem, but each used spoon goes straight to the kitchen to be washed.

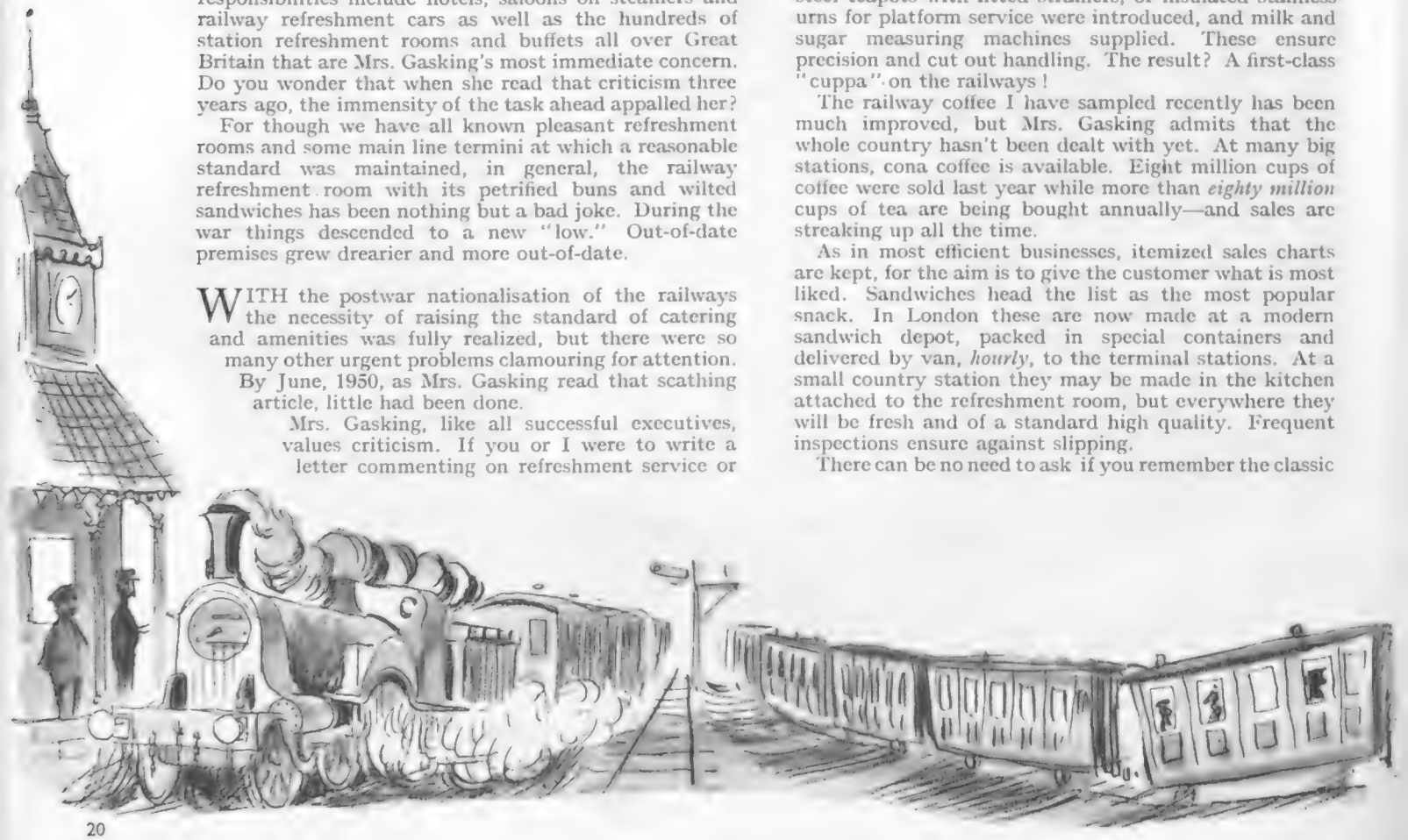
Installing new washing-up machines, and systems, takes time, but Mrs. Gasking at once set about providing something the customers could enjoy drinking. The expert advice of the Tea Bureau was enlisted, exacting tests made, and finally a good tea chosen. The same tea is now supplied to every refreshment room, and with it detailed instructions as to quantity and method of making.

ATTENDANTS who pass through the Hotels Executive's training school learn, in Mrs. Gasking's own words "the art of making and serving tea." Stainless steel teapots with fitted strainers, or insulated stainless urns for platform service were introduced, and milk and sugar measuring machines supplied. These ensure precision and cut out handling. The result? A first-class "cuppa" on the railways!

The railway coffee I have sampled recently has been much improved, but Mrs. Gasking admits that the whole country hasn't been dealt with yet. At many big stations, cona coffee is available. Eight million cups of coffee were sold last year while more than *eighty million* cups of tea are being bought annually—and sales are streaking up all the time.

As in most efficient businesses, itemized sales charts are kept, for the aim is to give the customer what is most liked. Sandwiches head the list as the most popular snack. In London these are now made at a modern sandwich depot, packed in special containers and delivered by van, *hourly*, to the terminal stations. At a small country station they may be made in the kitchen attached to the refreshment room, but everywhere they will be fresh and of a standard high quality. Frequent inspections ensure against slipping.

There can be no need to ask if you remember the classic



The Railway Bun

ailway bun, beloved of music-hall comedians ? Its dryness came from the fact that it had often taken a long journey before appearing under its glass dome. In the bad old days a large proportion of the food was made in ntral bakehouses and sent all over " the line." Now general principle is to buy in the open market the es the public likes the best. This gives scope for local variations—*mutton* pies in Scotland, pasties in Cornwall—ile ensuring that the standard favourites, crisps, packeted eet biscuits, biscuits and cheese, as well as sandwiches, available, too.

lso selling in vast quantities, and obtainable at mobile fets and trolleys and on some trains as well as at eshment-rooms, is the packed meal. The standard nu comprises sandwiches, biscuits and cheese, cake or and fruit, but lunch boxes are gladly put up to tomers' requirements.

he insistence on what the *customer* wants is typical. ticipating, creating and fulfilling the demand almost he same breath is an essential to success in big business, Mrs. Gasking was for thirty years (starting as a girl nineteen) one of the leading " brains " of private erprise in the country.

If I hadn't had that experience behind me—knowing ry department, marketing, publicity, costing, finance, ing, organisation, personnel—I could never have tled this job," she told me, sitting at the large, unttered desk that is the symbol of the clear-headed cutive. " It is a tremendous undertaking, you know. 're not only a catering business on a huge scale, but with special problems."

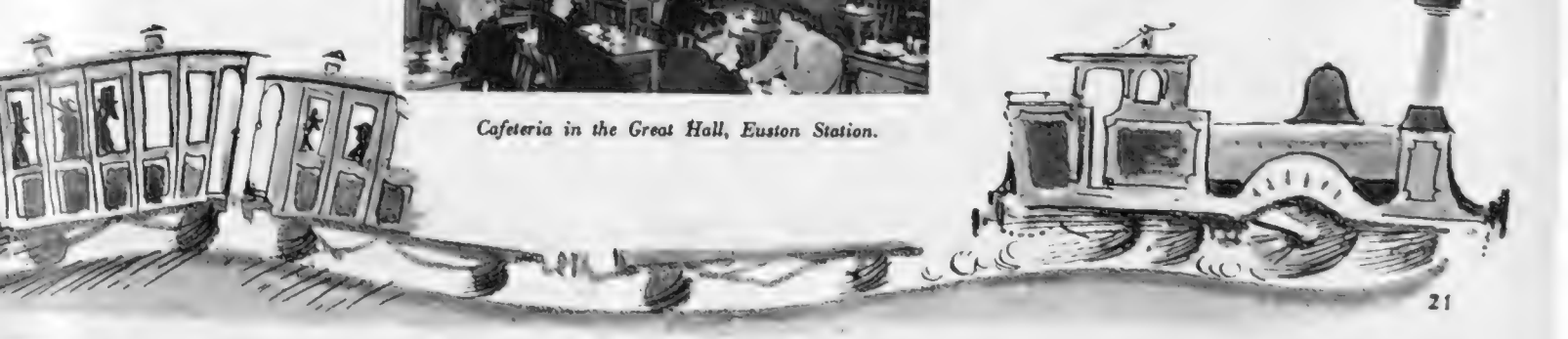
t doesn't take expert knowledge to realise this. Service required during very long hours, from early in the rning to quite late at night on average, but in many sts all round the clock. This means shift workings, h increased labour costs. Then the type of service manded varies from that appropriate to the big staurant at the main line terminus and to the small country buffet. Further, each of the old railway systems had its own traditions and methods : some letting out catering to concessionaires, others handling it direct. Most of the premises were old, inconvenient and ill-equipped, and to cap it all, under to-day's regime they are not even " owned " by the Hotels Executive that operates them, but by the sister division, the Railways Executive. You can see what tact that calls for when building and reconstruction priorities have to be decided !

The New Golden Arrow Bar at Victoria Station.

SO much needed doing over the whole railway field that it is only during the last two years that much in the way of modernising the refreshment-rooms themselves has been accomplished. Now, scarcely a month goes by without another forbidding relic of the aspidistra age being transformed into a bright, efficient cafeteria. Kitchens are re-styled simultaneously, with dish and glass-washing machines, stainless-steel fittings and the most approved new cooking appliances. At Euston, for instance, where a twenty-four-hour full meal service is maintained, a new Infra Grill can cook lamb chops in 1½ minutes. " Ah, wait until we can have all the meat we want," exclaimed Mrs. Gasking, " that will give the chefs a real chance ! "

In the (*Continued on page 72*)

Cafeteria in the Great Hall, Euston Station.



One Green

The shadow of the green bottle laughed aloud at fate.

"How lovely your bottle of leaves is," Elizabeth said, "I should like one for our flat."

IT was as though they could never see enough of bottles. The shop itself was full of them—glinting in racks, regimented on shelves ; dark bottles of red wine and clear ones of white, giraffe-necked hock bottles and bulbous Chiantis, rainbow liqueurs in fantastic containers, and the angular shapes that held whisky and gin.

The first time Julian was invited into their sitting-room behind the shop and saw the rounded half-litre bottle hanging on the wall he said :

" Is there something special about that one ? Is it the first bottle you sold, perhaps ? "

Leonard slewed his large body round in his chair and considered the bottle with some surprise.

" Blessed if I know," he said at last. " Can't remember. What *is* it for, Martha ? "

" It 's for putting leaves and flowers in when we bring them back from the country. Leaves are the best, little branches, then it looks as if we 've got a tree growing out of our wall."

" That 's a wonderful idea," Julian said. " It 's a kind of symbol, isn't it ? "

Julian was a poet. He was also twenty-two years old, and in love.

Martha, almost as large as her husband, with fine dark eyes and red cheeks regarded him blandly.

" That 's right, it 's a symbol," she agreed.

" How long have you been married, you two ? " he asked.

Leonard turned to Martha with his broad, full smile.

" Many years as we can remember, eh ? "

" Twenty-eight," Martha said.

TO Julian it sounded like eternity, time and to spare stretching out beyond the length of his own life.

" You seem as permanent together as the sun in the sky," he said, and,

Bottle

By
MARY WALKER

Illustrations by
JEAN McMANUS

after a moment: "That 's how I shall be with Elizabeth."

But when he had said good-night and was climbing the stairs of the house next door he was not so sure. There was a job still to find, and a place they could decently live in, there was his poetry, there were Elizabeth's relations looking down their noses and silently expecting the worst.

All the same, however he might damp them down with reason, the flames of happiness would flicker up. From his window at the top of the house he could see stars and roof-tops in a summer night warmed by the glow of street lamps. He belonged, after all, to the chosen race of poets, and Elizabeth loved him, and to-morrow was Saturday. . . .

Early in the morning the doorbell rang and he ran, a half-eaten apple still in his hand, down the flights of narrow stairs.

Elizabeth stood on the pavement waiting, small and sedate, her fair hair shining. When she was away from him he found it hard to remember exactly what she looked like: the particular shade of grey in her eyes and the shape of her mouth, for instance. So every time they met it was as though he saw a mysteriously beloved stranger, and for a few moments all that he felt for her was new again.

Up in his room she sat curled on the end of his bed, one elbow on the window-sill, leaning back into the sunlight.

"We 've got the whole day," he said. "We can do anything we like with it."

He stood with his back to the door, in his shirt-sleeves, smiling. Then, suddenly, to his astonishment, he saw the beginnings of tears in her eyes.

"But darling, darling, what is it?" he cried, stumbling in his hurry to reach and comfort her.

"It 's nothing, it 's nonsense," she shook her head, shaking the tears away. "Only I love you so much—and you 're so *thin*!" (*Continued on page* 54)

We Plan A

WITH Michael Sheridan we have planned this room and arranged with Catesby's, the well-known furnishers, for a representation of it to be on view at their Tottenham Court Road store during the month of September.

WHATEVER else it is—we told ourselves firmly when we started with all the enthusiasm of any newly-wed to plan " Our Room "—it must not be a mere exhibition piece. It must be the sort of room we should like to *live* in : gay, friendly, comfortable and, above all, adaptable. We would rely, not on specially designed furniture and " freak " architecture, but on standard, mostly tax-free, pieces, combined with unusual colours and the little individual touches that make the difference between " house " and " home."

So, basically, it is the kind of room you might meet in any one of a thousand houses or flats—roughly fifteen-by-twelve and, with its fireplace bang in the middle of one long wall, inclined to be " box-y." We resisted the temptation to be symmetrical and treat both sides of the fireplace the same, which would only have emphasised the boxiness. Instead, we created a " cosy corner " by designing in one chimney recess a simple arrangement of shelves for books, china and radio which could be knocked up by the handyman of the house or the local carpenter. A sliding panel conceals a compartment nearest the fire for logs, coal and the necessary, but unsightly, fireside impedimenta.

Deep mulberry wallpaper with a brilliant lemon-peel star above the shelves, linked to orchid pink on the adjoining short wall, gives our relaxing corner a self-contained cosiness and, since the rest of the walls are soft grey, successfully breaks up the room's squareness.

The general colour scheme is based on subtle shades of orchid pink contrasted with vivid lemon peel for accessories and dusty yellow for the carpet. For the floor, incidentally, we chose one of the new " patterned plain " carpets whose tiny, all-over speckled design is more practical than a self colour, yet is not marked enough to be obtrusive.

For our cosy corner we finally settled on a group of sectional upholstery, largely because it makes an infinite variety of arrangements possible without added expense. A corner section can be combined with two centre sections to make a full-length settee or, as we have suggested, to make an intimate right-angled fireside group, ideal, incidentally, for televiewing. Each piece can, of course, be used separately as a chair. This group is covered in a striped textured tweed in grey with a faint pinkish tinge that echoes the orchid tones. The corner section costs £19 13s. 9d., the others £13 2s. 6d. each.

We chose a modernised version of the traditional wing chair for the window side of the fireplace. Used with a large sprung stool which providentially is the

A side table, left, not seen in our drawing, can be bought and used as a separate unit though designed to fit as an extension to the D-end of a dining-table. The pastel grey and white Sanderson paper below suggests an alternative for the recess panel if a two-colour background is preferred.

Living Room

In assembling this scheme of furnishing for an average sitting-room, we have set out to achieve comfort and character within the compass of a small room and an inflexible budget

THE essential simplicity of contemporary furniture calls for more virility in supporting colours, textures and patterns than we are accustomed to associate with furnishing schemes of an earlier genre. Three colours are used for the walls of this living-room, pastel grey, pink with paper for one recess in a deep mulberry lightly scattered with yellow stars. The yellow accent repeats itself in the carpet —now a little muted—in the mounting of a picture and in stabs of colour for cushions and accessory details. The settee, which divides at will into four units, answers the problem of limited space. The corner fitment is an elaboration of four shelves divided and fitted with a sliding panel door making it possible for the cupboard to be in the centre or at one side as convenience dictates

ANOTHER side of the same room shows the rest of the furniture in the scheme. The wall bureau fitment and hanging bookshelf were chosen as they serve their purpose without taking up valuable floor space. The upright chair is upholstered to match the unit settee and a close-up of the jardinière is shown in the photograph opposite. The wing chair and foot-stool, which does duty as extra seating accommodation when required, are covered in the same material as the curtains, a pale mulberry toned glazed chintz. The pelmet is contrived from a useful and inexpensive fabric by George Henderson, which is photographed on a previous page. This material can be used full width for cushion covers, etc., or cut into strips lengthwise for pelmets or pleated valances for loose covers. It is made in several colour schemes, each with a plain matching material

With a little adaptation to individual plans and pockets this could be anybody's room. All the furnishings and fabrics are available

same height and width as the chair seat, this becomes an inviting chaise-longue. But on occasion the stool will double as extra seat or even as a low table to take a tea tray. The chair costs £16 14s., the stool £6 18s. 6d.

FOR curtains and loose covers for the wing chair and stool, we found an inexpensive, plain-coloured chintz in orchid shades, a pale tone for curtains and a deeper one for upholstery. This has a permanent "Everglaze" finish which will withstand any amount of washing or dry cleaning and costs 13s. 3d. a yard. To match these plain chintzes, which are also available in over twenty other colours, famous artist Duncan Grant designed the cunning off-the-peg pelmet. This sparkling pattern of scrolls and curves is so devised that it can be cut round any portion to give a shaped edge to the pelmet. It is made in five different colour combinations which, between them, tone with any of the self colours.

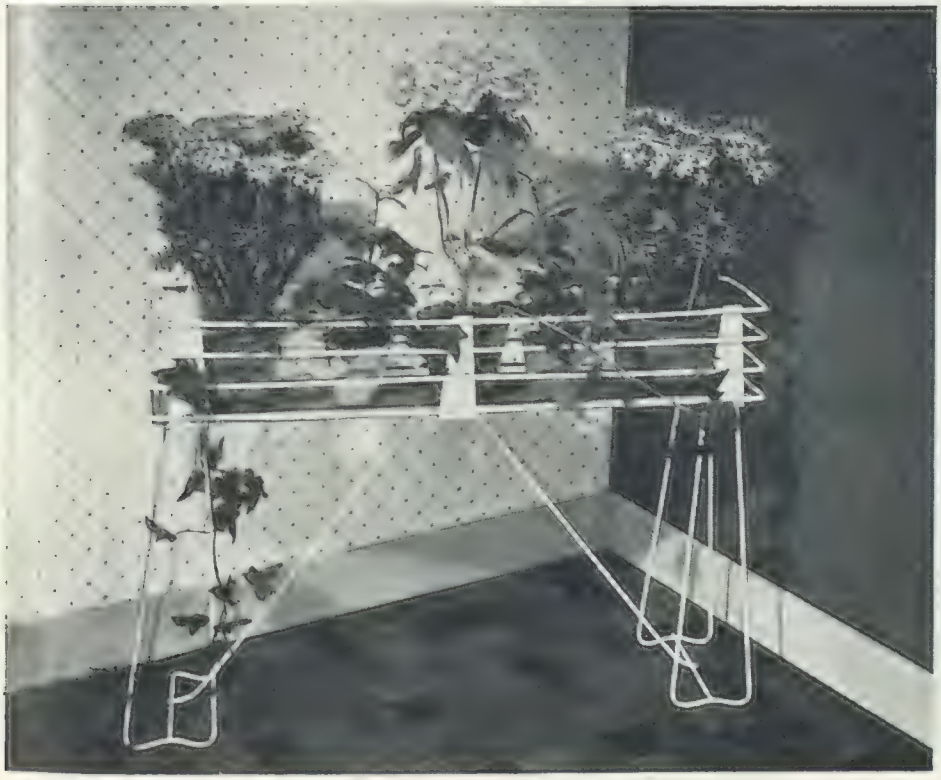
These pelmets would, incidentally, make gay patterned valances to plain chintz bedspreads or chair covers. And, since they are sold by the yard in the form of a chintz with a white stripe between each pelmet strip, they would make an unusual striped curtain fabric in their own right.

Somewhere to write quietly is almost a must in most sitting-rooms, so we turned our second fireplace recess into a study corner with a space-saving hanging bureau in natural elm and mahogany.

THE large circular coffee table, £4 5s., and small side table, illustrated on page are in natural elm, a pinkish, traditionally English wood which deserves to be more widely used. Although it can be bought separately, the side table with its one concave side is part of a dining group which could be combined with our other furnishings in a sitting-dining-room. When required, it fits snugly to the D-end of the dining-table to form an extension.

And the cost of our room? We allowed ourselves to overstep slightly today's accepted minimum of £150 for a room of this kind but we consoled ourselves with the thought that if necessary we could adjust the scheme to a more rigid budget without hardship. One of the sectional chairs could be omitted, if only temporarily; a square would cost less than a fitted carpet and, in practice, an "inherited" desk or writing-table might replace the hanging bureau.

And we quieted our conscience by making most of our own accessories—except the irresistible white painted jardinière under the window. Flower prints in a symmetrical group at one side of the chimney breast cost, for example, 9d. each in a secondhand bookshop and were framed in white for a few shillings. And most of our lamps were converted from jars and bottles by means of a ready-made adaptor that costs under 10s. and can be adjusted to fit any sized neck.



IN the picture above is another view of the desk which is shown open in the colour drawing on the facing page. The quality of craftsmanship and material make this an important piece though it is designed to occupy the smallest space. The compartment underneath is for magazines. Still more colour for our contemporary scheme is introduced with growing plants. Here on the left is the white metal jardinière which stands in the window of the room

The Lead Stealers

by

Laurence Kirk

Illustrations by

D. L. Mays

THE vicar was quite red in the face at the end of the meeting.

"All right," he said. "If you won't, you won't. But the only reason that St. Paul's is still standing is that it had a devoted crew of firewatchers who dealt with the firebombs before they could do any harm. They were organized long before the government stepped in. I think it's exactly the same now. We've still got half a dozen wars on our hands and one of them is against this lead stealing. Nobody's going to get the lead off St. Swithin's as long as I'm still breathing, and if you won't help me I'll organize it myself. My choirboys will be quite ready to lend a hand. But don't forget that St. Swithin's isn't the only building in Parva Magna with a valuable load of lead on the roof. You've got five hundred pounds worth at The Manor, Sir Charles. And you, Colonel, have got nearly as much at Redridge. If either of you wakes up one morning and finds that it's gone, it'll be just too bad and I shall be the first to say I told you so."

Parva Magna is one of those charming, leafy, self-contented English villages with a green in the middle and its church on the green. It is surrounded by stately mansions standing in their own grounds. The three largest of these have degenerated into a private school, a private asylum, and a headquarters of the Coal Board; but the smaller ones are still occupied by retired and distinguished people. It was a veritable lead-stealers' paradise; for not only were the roofs of the mansions heavy with it, but even some of the cottages had a modest load. Parva Magna had been built to last. And its one policeman lived very happily with his wife and children in a thatched cottage which had a white jasmine hanging over the porch.

THE vicar was the best type of militant churchman and it was the robbing of the lead from St. Mary's at Clinton Hassock only ten miles away that had roused him to their danger at Parva Magna. He soon had his affair organized. He took the midnight watch from twelve to four himself and he was armed with a hunting horn. The next watches—from ten to twelve and four to six—were taken by Bill Smith, Sam Bowen, Adam King, and the other choirboys whose voices had broken, while the young trebles did the period from eight to ten in the evening.

THE choirboys gripped their candlesticks but there was no need for them. A moment later they were on the roof and there, motionless, face down in the gutter, lay Michael, while beyond him, equally motionless, was another young man sprawled against the sloping roof

This was the summer roster and, of course, it would have to be extended in the winter.

Their system of communication was primitive, but not ineffectual. Each watcher was provided with a penny whistle and a couple of roman candles left over from last year's firework display. The vicar was a light sleeper and he judged that this would be enough to waken him and give him time to rouse the whole village with his hunting horn.

The superior people in the village and round about were inclined to laugh at all these preparations; but the organization had only been going a fortnight when the Colonel at Redridge woke up one morning with water dripping through the ceiling and splashing on his chest in bed. Investigation soon showed that the whole of the lead on the roof of Redridge had been cut away.

The vicar was a better man than his word; he refrained from saying I told you so, but he was now obliged to merge his lead-watching outfit in the larger organization which was being formed to protect the whole village. He was reluctant to do this; he liked having his own little band of workers under his control. Now there would be interference from the Colonel and Sir Charles. Colonels always expected to be in command even when they were past their prime. But there was really no alternative.

Sam Bowen and Adam King had fathers, the butcher and baker respectively, who had lead on their roofs. Naturally he had to surrender at least a part of their time. And he did get quite a lot in return. The school holidays were just beginning and several boys and girls who went to distant boarding and public schools were now able to reinforce the choirboys.

These included the Colonel's Michael and John, Sir Charles's Veronica and Pam, as well as half a dozen others; and old George, the fat policeman, now relieved the vicar on the roof of St. Swithin's when he (*Continued on page* 56)

WHEN the yellow cone of brightness flashed down, he found himself staring at the agonized face of Michael, the Colonel's elder son

Historical Romance

The Loves of Becky Sharp

THERE was a dreadful thumping at my door, and Sir Pitt Crawley entered in his night-cap and dressing-gown! As I shrank away he seized my candle and said, "No candles after eleven o'clock, Miss Becky"

by

JOHN HERBERT

Illustrations by

ROBERT HODGSON

WHEN Thackeray named his great story of Regency manners *Vanity Fair* he subtitled it *A Novel Without A Hero*. But if he omitted a hero he included in the book a character that stands out as one of fiction's famous heroines—that determined social climber, queen of fortune-hunters and relentless pursuer of men, Becky Sharp.

Green-eyed, unscrupulous Rebecca Sharp, humbly born daughter of a feckless artist and a French opera-dancer, who charmed and philandered her way into Regency high society, is the most vivid and vivacious of all Thackeray's women. She is also the most disreputable; but though her creator gives her no more than her deserts in the end, he has a sneaking sympathy for her frailties.

"I think," says Becky in the heyday of her gold-digging career, "I could be a good woman if I had five thousand a year." To which Thackeray charitably adds: "And who knows but Rebecca was right in her speculations—and that it was only a question of money and fortune which made the difference between her and an honest woman?"

How far was the calculating minx of *Vanity Fair* Thackeray's own creation and how far drawn from a real-life prototype? It has been suggested that Becky is largely a portrait of a contemporary adventuress and successful novelist called Sidney Owenson, who afterwards became Lady Morgan.

LIKE Becky, Sidney Owenson had a somewhat Bohemian background: like Becky she became a governess. Next she was companion to a marchioness, with whose husband she had an intrigue (compare governess Becky's association with Sir Pitt Crawley and her later liaison with the Marquis of Steyne); and to avert a scandal she agreed to marry the family physician, Dr. Morgan—on the condition that the marquis secured him

a knighthood. And so as Lady Morgan this ex-companion led a gay life with her husband in Paris and other Continental resorts (compare Becky's Continental sojourn) before returning to London.

While Becky's career was hardly so successful (she gained no title and lost her husband and her reputation) it was not for want of trying. To rise in the world she exercised from the very start her wiles of flattery and flirtation on every eligible man she met.

We get opening glimpses of Becky at her tricks as a young teacher at Miss Pinkerton's academy. "She was small and slight in person; pale, sandy-haired, and with eyes habitually cast down : when they looked up they were very large, odd and attractive; so attractive that the Reverend Mr. Crisp, fresh from Oxford, and curate to the vicar of Chiswick, fell in love with Miss Sharp; being shot dead by a glance of her eyes which was fired all the way across Chiswick Church from the school-pew to the reading-desk."

BUT that was just one of her preliminary canters. It was on stout Jos Sedley, brother of her friend Amelia, that she first went to work seriously.

That Jos was a confirmed bachelor and a pompous, conceited bore mattered to her not at all. Was he not an Anglo-Indian nabob with expectations from a rich father? And so in the Sedley mansion in Russell Square she set her cap at him unblushingly.

Jos, poor simpleton, was quite bowled over; and when Amelia and a friend found them *tête-à-tête* in the parlour, Jos holding round his outstretched hands a skein of silk for her to wind, it seemed that Becky had made a sweeping conquest.

But, alas, the cautious and elusive Jos was not to be hooked—not even after he had almost declared himself irrevocably in the romantic setting of Vauxhall Gardens. A letter to his sister Amelia announced his convenient ill-health and withdrawal to the safety of Cheltenham—and signalled Becky's initial failure to get her man.

At Queen's Crawley, Hampshire home of the Crawley family, whither she went as governess, she found greater scope for her feminine wiles, captivating vulgar old Sir Pitt Crawley, who never could resist a pretty face.

Of an early encounter with the baronet she wrote to Amelia : "I was interrupted last night by a dreadful thumping at my door, and who do you think it was? Sir Pitt Crawley in his night-cap and dressing-gown, such a figure! As I shrank away from such a visitor, he came forward and seized my candle. 'No candles after eleven o'clock, Miss Becky,' said he. 'Go to bed in the dark, you pretty little hussy, and unless you wish me to come for the candle every night, mind and be in bed by eleven.' And with this he and Mr. Horrocks the butler went off laughing."

DEMURE and charming, Becky soon fired the old baronet with romantic ideas—but how thoroughly she had ensnared him she realized only when, on the death of his second wife, Sir Pitt Crawley presented himself to her at his sister's London house and proposed marriage.

"The old man [writes Thackeray] fell down on his knees and leered at her like a satyr. Rebecca started back, a picture of consternation. She lost her presence of mind and wept some of the most

OSBORNE, in escorting Becky from the ballroom, handed her a bouquet, "but when he gave it to the owner, there lay a note, coiled like a snake among the flowers"

CRAWLEY struck Steyne across the face and knocked him down; and he trembling and abject Becky he led from the room

enuine tears that ever fell from her yes. 'Oh, Sir Pitt!' she cried. 'Oh sir— —I'm married already.'"

Well might poor Becky weep to have refuse the glittering prize of a title. he had indeed overreached herself adly; for never having considered Sir Pitt as a possible husband she had secretly arried his second son Rawdon, dashing oung Corinthian blood in the Dragoons id favourite of his rich aunt, Miss rawley.

But now even her marriage to the enniless, extravagant Rawdon proved a id investment, for the angry Miss rawley disinherited him for marrying a heming nobody.

If Becky was a schemer (whose schemes lid not always succeed) she was also a eartless flirt not above intriguing with the husband of her best friend, the sweet-natured and docile Amelia.

Newly married Emmy and her officer-husband George Osborne were with Becky and Rawdon among the concourse of "fair women and brave men" that thronged Brussels before Waterloo; and at a brilliant ball on the eve of that battle Becky brazenly carried on with the vain and fickle George.

Osborne, in escorting Becky from the ballroom, handed her a bouquet, "but when he gave it to the owner, there lay a note, coiled like a snake among the flowers. Rebecca's eye caught it at once. Rebecca gave George her hand with one of her quick knowing glances and made a curtsy and walked away. George bowed over the hand, his brain throbbing with triumph and excitement." And all the while poor Amelia, attended by her faithful friend Bill Dobbin, sat watching, humiliated and heart-broken at this flagrant betrayal.

But Amelia's husband was to hold no assignation with Becky. That night he was called to the front and next day was killed at the Battle of Waterloo.

BASKING in the admiration of the dandies of Paris and London (the women were less enthusiastic), Becky knew what it was to triumph socially. But her gay life cost more money than Rawdon's half-pay and gambling winnings could provide. A new source of income had to be found to pay the mounting debts and finance her son's education.

And here it was that the influential and rascally Lord Steyne came into the picture.

The marquis, a pillar of society and a worldly sensualist, made no secret of his admiration for her and his desire to help her; she became his protégée and, showered with his gifts and money, entered on a new phase of extravagant living. But Becky's downfall was approaching; and it came when Rawdon, released from detention for debt, returned to their Curzon Street home unexpectedly and caught her red-handed, alone with her elderly protector.

"A little table with a dinner was laid out—and wine and plate. Steyne was hanging over the sofa on which Becky sat. The wretched woman was in a brilliant full toilette, her arms and all her fingers sparkling with bracelets and rings; and the brilliants on her breast which Steyne had given her. He had her hand in his, and was bowing over it to kiss it, when Becky started up with a faint scream as she caught sight of Rawdon's white face. At the next instant she tried a smile, a horrid smile, as if to welcome her husband: and Steyne rose up, grinding his teeth, pale and with fury in his looks.

"He, too, attempted a laugh—and came forward holding out his hand. 'What, come back! How d'ye do, Crawley?' he said, the nerves of his mouth twitching as he tried to grin at the intruder.

"There was that in Rawdon's face which caused Becky to fling herself before him. 'I am innocent, Rawdon,' she said; 'before God I am innocent.'"

Desperately she appealed to Steyne, who turned on her and abused her. And then Crawley struck him across the face and knocked him down; and the trembling and abject Becky he led from the room.

THIS was the end for Rebecca. The scandal was hushed up but she and Rawdon separated, and thenceforth she wandered round Europe living on her wits, condemned to social oblivion and the company of dubious associates.

Was Thackeray hard on her? Not, perhaps, considering the morals of the Victorian readers for whom he was writing. And he did put one worthy action to the credit of fortune-hunting, faithless Becky Sharp: he made her bring together Emmy, the girlhood friend whom she had wronged so grievously on the eve of Waterloo, and William Dobbin, Emmy's faithful admirer for many years.

Surely Becky, as portrayed by the worldly-wise yet sympathetic pen of her creator, is for all her faults a more human and engaging character than many primmer heroines of fiction.

by
Francis Butterfield

Cage Me A

YOU cannot cage a butterfly, and the life of the cut flower is short, but if you want the lively loveliness of a butterfly and the delicacy of an unfading flower captured in Green Mansions, you should get yourself—or your children—an aquarium.

A furnished aquarium can be one of the most delightful objects of an interior decorative scheme. By "furnished" we mean one with its complement of water-plants and fishes.

They are not particularly expensive to install and their maintenance costs little more than time—time that no enthusiastic aquarist will consider could have been better spent.

There are two main divisions of aquaria—cold-water and heated water tanks. Cold-water tanks are mechanically the easier to look after, and are usually occupied by one or more of the varieties of cold-water fish. The beginner will usually start with the Shubunkin, which is a "goldfish" type, but he—or she—is likely to move on to the more decorative types, such as the Fantail, Veiltail or Moor.

Fish breeders have produced, over the centuries since the Chinese took an interest in the carp, the most beautiful and captivating plumage—if I may be allowed the word. Finnage is the correct technical expression, but I think plumage is more descriptive since these appendages have a grace not usually associated with fish fins.

Their colours range from silver, through bronze to yellow, gold and red, and in the case of the Shubunkin there is a wonderful mottling of black, red and gold on a bluish mother-of-pearl background.

The Moor is, naturally, black, and the best examples of these triumphs of breeding are really black, but black without a hint of the natural colour of fish. These fishes invariably have telescope or pop eyes—eyes that stand out from the head like sizeable beads. They are not as horrific as they sound, but there are examples of the breeders' art that could, perhaps, have been better left alone. Such fishes as Celestials, which are permanently gazing upwards, and Lionheads, which have heads like small cauliflowers, may be a genetic triumph, but they are hardly the fishes for the amateur, particularly since they are usually very expensive indeed—goldfish worth much more than their weight in gold, literally.

WHATEVER the kind of fishes one keeps, they should always be supplied with as many growing plants as possible.

Apart from the beauty of these aquatic gardens they are necessary to the health of the fishes. Among other qualities they have the attribute of being able to absorb carbon dioxide from the water, and this gas is as deadly to fishes as to air-breathing animals.

Plants do not oxygenate the water; they are, in a way, scavengers, but they are indispensible if only for their decorative value.

There are not very many plants for the cold-water aquarium—not nearly as many as there are for warmer water—but they will, properly planted, grow at a most satisfying rate, and indeed some need not be planted. Merely anchored, they will need regular pruning to keep them within reasonable limits.

It is better, on the whole, to buy these plants from a reputable dealer because his stock is conditioned for the aquarium. Many of them can be found growing wild, but the cultivated kinds are the better proposition.

You will soon learn not to call them weeds. Having to pay cash for them quickly sends them up a notch or two in your botanical estimation.

THE tropical or warm-water aquarium is a little more difficult, or should I say "interesting," to manage.

Its principal difference is that the water must be heated and kept within a few degrees of a decided temperature—say about 75° Fahrenheit. It does not matter how it is heated as long as it is controlled. Too great a difference can mean either chilled or boiled fishes—which means death.

This is not as terrifying as it might appear. There are instruments, heaters and (*Continued on page* 64)

Rainbow

The warm water tank below has been arranged and stocked by Fishtanks, Ltd. The large striped fish in the upper righthand corner are Angel fish, the smaller striped ones grouped in the centre are Tiger Barbs. The large purplish fish, centre, is a Siamese Fighting fish, with a pair of Red Wagtail Swordtail fish above him, Harlequins and Red Platys adding their own quota of colour and movement to the scene. The drawings of some warm-water fish, below, were made by the author

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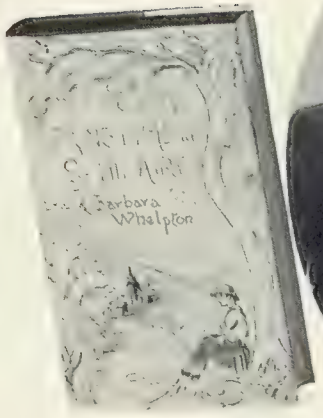
Doris Lessing



Eric and Barbara Whelpton

Book Reviews:

by Trevor Allen

Austin Coates

WHILE we are still in holiday mood, let's enjoy the sun at "St. Hilaire," a cover-name for the kind of village you find on the Yonne, a short run from Paris. It has rare characters—an old farmer, for example, who has a cheery record made to be loud-speakered to the mourners at his funeral, telling them to drink and enjoy themselves. It also has a hilarious fête at which everything goes wrong, the goat "Mr. Truman" breaks free, butts Hortense Petitpot in her ample stern, knocking her flat, leaps off the chariot, chases the band, punctures the big drum, then vanishes into open country to live for days on the fat of the land. Eric and Barbara Whelpton's **"Springtime At St. Hilaire"** (Museum Press, 15s.), with Mrs. Whelpton's lithographs, is enchanting. He was born and bred in France, so knows the life from the inside.

ANOTHER journey into the sun was Geoffrey Dutton's, with wife, from London to Colombo by car, Australia-bound, by way of Jugoslavia, Greece, Turkey, Iraq, Persia, Afghanistan, India. The red tape they met—and the diverting sights and people! On a road in Turkey, for instance, a big bear led by a boy and behind him, facing each other on a donkey's back, two baby bears boxing with their fat paws. In Afghanistan a guide who expressed his disgust for marriage and a youth of twenty-five who had fathered seven children: "All dat damn breeding and all dose tings round-about." **"A Long Way South"** (Chapman & Hall, 18s.) is a most diverting travelogue with revealing slants on the new India and the sad, abandoned Anglo-Indian haunts.

INDIA and her people as they impress a Westerner who adopts Indian dress and lives in Indian homes are intimately described by Austin Coates, son of the composer, in **"Invitation To An Eastern Feast"** (Hutchinson, 21s.). A formal Hindu wedding feast lasts for three days, and during it the bridegroom is handed over to the ladies of the bride's family to make a complete fool of him if they can. The bride returns to her parents, paying only short visits to her husband's and father-in-law's house; not for nearly a year does she settle permanently with her husband. We learn much about caste and other customs and cover Burma and China as well. The writing is sensitive; Francis Wu's photographs are exceptional.

THE sun is with us still in Cedric Salter's **"Introducing Spain"** (Methuen, 18s.). Writing from six years' residence there, he (*Continued on page 65*)

How To Do It

ONE attraction of hobbies and pastimes is the number of books we need to read to be good at them. Maj.-Gen. Geoffrey Brook's **"Introduction To Riding And Stablecraft"** should help to keep beginners well seated and their pony or horse happy. Eric Taverner's **"Introduction To Angling"** is how to get bites and keep 'em, with expert advice on gadgets, worms, flies (Seeley Service, 15s. each). C. W. Thurlow Craig's **"Baitmaker's Delight"** (Hutchinson, 9s. 6d.) expounds the whole science of luring. Lawrence D. Hill's **"Alpines Without A Garden"** (Faber, 12s. 6d.) shows what you can do with window-sills, flat roofs and pocket-handkerchief plots if you know about these plus-200 species and hybrids. All this still leaves time to take the dog out—provided you've mastered a few books on dogs. Bless me, the things we have to know!

The brolly has opened up in history as often as it has gone up to protect us from the rain

The Victorians called it a parasol and trimmed it with ribbons and roses, but the elaborate thing that sheltered Sennacherib, the Assyrian king, and the Japanese lovers (right) from sun and rain was still our old friend the umbrella

The Career Of The Brolly

By DAVID GUNSTON

THE inventor of the umbrella is commonly supposed to have been that amiable English eccentric, Jonas Hanway, who lived from 1712 until 1786. This worthy did many things, including the writing of dry-as-dust books with yard-long titles and the waging of an all-out war on the drinking of tea, but he certainly did not invent any article as useful as the umbrella. It is truer to say that he made it popular among ordinary folk, and in doing so brought ridicule on his own head, but rendered a permanent service to posterity.

Umbrellas and sunshades, or articles that served as both, date back at least to the days of Nineveh and Babylon. The inhabitants of ancient Greece, Turkey, Persia, India, China and Egypt all knew the umbrella, but not from first-hand. For it was always a royal monopoly, a kind of regal badge of office. Only kings and potentates had umbrellas : lesser mortals held them over the august heads of their rulers, or else gaped at them from a respectful distance. Assyrian bas-reliefs show many impressions of scantily clad slaves holding large umbrellas over the heads of kings and princes, sometimes even in battle.

Even the Aztec emperors preferred to use big umbrellas rather than get wet; and they employed relays of nobles of high estate, four at a time, to hold up the imperial brolly.

These ancient umbrellas were almost invariably superb affairs, rich in embroidery, gold lace, pearls and tasselled silks. Their handles were carved in ivory or ebony, inlaid or wrought in gold. Persian caliphs, Mogul emperors, Burmese kings, Turkish beys, Grecian priestesses, Indian princes, all these at various times used the umbrella to keep off rain or sun, and it was always regarded as a dignified part of their official regalia. To this day, in fact, one of the King of Siam's many royal titles is "Possessor of the Twenty-four Umbrellas."

Despite its widespread use in the Orient, the umbrella was long coming to Europe, and longer still coming to be the everyday accoutrement it is today. It was first introduced to Britain early in the seventeenth century, doubtless by travellers from India, and must have been fairly familiar by 1630. For in that year there is a reference in Ben Jonson's play *The Devil Is An Ass*, wherein a character describing an accident which befell a lady, remarks : "And there she lay, flat spread as an umbrella."

Those early European umbrellas were made to the Chinese pattern, with voluminous folds of thin oiled silk, very difficult to open and close, and very clumsy to keep taut in wet weather. Swift catches the scene in his lines :

> "The tucked-up sempstress walks with hasty strides,
> While streams run down her oiled umbrella's sides."

Always umbrellas were feminine objects, designed to protect fine clothes and fair features from rain-splashes. For a man to employ such protection was dismissed as effeminate.

That is where Jonas Hanway came in. Fresh back from a long journey in the centre of China, he was full of the value of these strange rain-protectors, and with missionary zeal decided they ought to be widely used, not only by royalty, but by the masses. So he had several umbrellas made, and in spite of the jeers of the streetboys and the (*Continued on page 72*)

How To Slim

Beauty by Chrysis

NO, this is not yet another slimming diet to end all diets. There are enough perfectly sound and effective dieting recipes already without adding any more. This is a discourse on *keeping* to a slimming diet, for it is a sad fact that for every one woman who has successfully slimmed by dieting, there are countless numbers who fail.

You need have no doubt that dieting is the most effective way of losing weight. It is better than exercise, massage and everything else put together. Eat only what the body requires to tick over in good health, and there won't be any fatty layers anywhere. An expert has said that a slimming diet followed faithfully for one month out of the year will keep every normal figure in perfect proportion, and that includes most people from the middle-age spreads to the puppy fatties.

Most slimming diets are based on one main principle, that is to cut down on the "starchy" and "fatty" foods. There are, of course, many variations. Some diets restrict the fluid intake, some allow eggs, others restrict butter, and so on. But any woman who is just a little more overweight than she would like to be can devise for herself her own slimming treatment, without going to the expense of consulting a slimming specialist, by merely going on to a low starch diet.

Everybody knows what to eat and what to avoid on a low starch programme. There is an embargo on sugar and sweetened foods, puddings, potatoes, fries and bread. You make up with fruit, vegetables, and protein foods like meat, cheese, etc., and go easy on butter, milk, and an overplus of fluids. The diet itself is easy, the problem is to keep

Specimen Menu No. 1

BREAKFAST

- Energen breakfast flakes, average portion.
- Egg, poached, boiled or scrambled.
- 3 Energen rolls with butter
- ½ oz. Energen marmalade
- Tea or coffee with milk

LUNCH

- Clear soup
- 2 oz. lean meat, cabbage and carrots
- 3 Energen rolls with butter
- 2½ oz. grapes or figs

DINNER

- Half grapefruit
- 2 oz. braised rabbit, turnip and cauliflower
- 2 Energen rolls with butter
- 2 oz. stewed apricots with 3 tablespoons baked custard
- Coffee

On A Diet

to the diet, without cheating. Obvious? Yes, but unfortunately there is a lot of self-deception about food.

You will have the best chance of keeping rigidly to any slimming diet if you avoid getting hungry. This is a comforting thought to anyone for whom a diet and starvation are practically synonymous.

Start the day with an adequate breakfast. You may not normally have a cooked breakfast, but if it will see you happily through the morning and prevent you falling ravenously on your lunch, then it is more slimming than no breakfast.

As for the main meals themselves, with the meat situation continuing favourable, the slimmers' task is made easier. What hardship is there about a diet which allows a tasty grilled chop with lashings of green salad, cheese, fruit and coffee twice a day if you want it?

Alcohol is forbidden on all slimming diets, so cocktails should be of the pure fruit juice variety and coffee taken without liqueurs. If you must drink something (by that I mean at formal dinners and not just as a figure of speech) stick to the lightest of dinner wine and a minimum of it.

A LOT of people who can take a stoical view of the prospect of no buns, cakes or sweets, are dismayed at the prospect of no bread or potatoes. The answer for them is special bread rolls. There is eight times as much starch in one thin slice of ordinary bread as there is in one Energen roll, so that two or even three for breakfast and one or two at each of the two main meals of the day is still less fattening than one slice of bread. Energen also make special breakfast flakes and low-sugar marmalade which make light of dieting at the breakfast-table.

But, however you approach it, a slimming diet will necessarily involve eating less in bulk than you have been accustomed to, and it is when the appetite is strongest that the will is at its weakest. So you must set out to "spoil your appetite" with non-fattening things. Apples, for instance, can be chewed with impunity.

THIS principle of "spoiling the appetite" is put on a scientific basis by a new slimming treatment. Up till now anything which resembled a slimming pill had to be viewed with caution.

The new slimming method, though in tablet form, is not a drug, but a harmless vegetable preparation which reduces the desire for food by providing a non-fattening bulk. The tablet is taken with a glass of water half an hour before mealtimes, and deludes the stomach into thinking it has had a large meal, when really it has had only a light salad. Another vitamin tablet is taken after the meal.

This slimming treatment is taken in conjunction with a balanced low starch diet. The tablets are not a substitute for food, nor do they contain any slimming properties in themselves. Their aim is to partially satisfy the appetite, and help the weak-willed to keep rigidly to a diet.

Actually, anyone on a slimming diet should take a compound vitamin preparation. There are certain essential vitamin substances which occur in foods like milk and butter which will be taken only sparingly on a diet and which have to be made up in other ways if the health is to be maintained. This, again, helps to make the reducing more satisfying.

There are three specimen diet menus on these pages. Far from being a privation, they appear to be good eating.

Specimen Menu No. 2

BREAKFAST

Energen breakfast flakes
1 oz. grilled lean bacon
3 Energen rolls with butter
½ oz. Energen marmalade
Tea or coffee with milk

LUNCH

Tomato juice
3 oz. grilled white fish, carrots and cauliflower
3 Energen rolls with butter
1 slice fresh pineapple

DINNER

1 egg and ½ oz. cheese as soufflé with tomatoes
2 Energen rolls with butter
3 oz. fresh plums with 3 tablespoonsful of rice pudding
Coffee

Specimen Menu No. 3

BREAKFAST

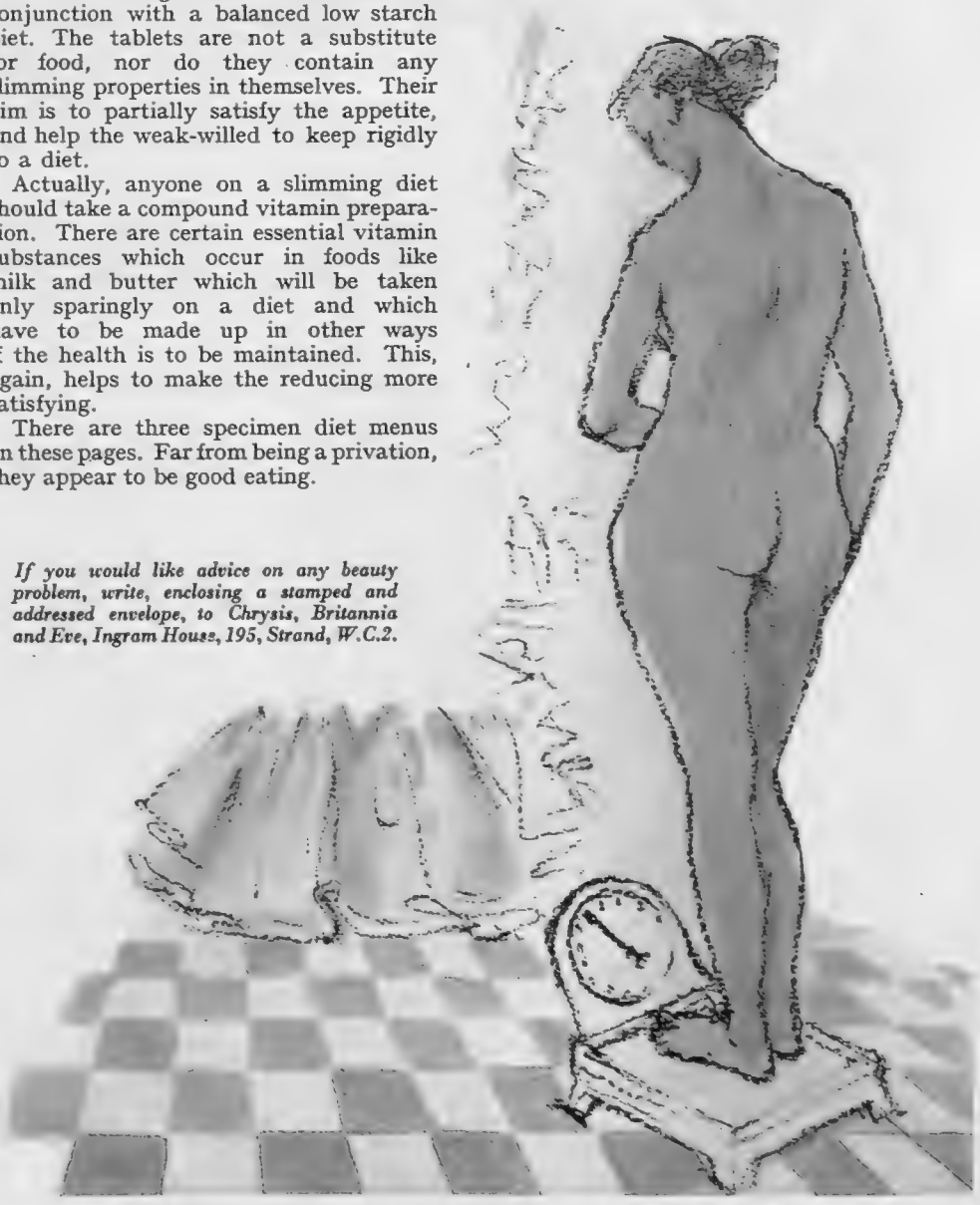
Energen breakfast flakes
1 kipper or 1 herring
3 Energen rolls with butter
½ oz. Energen marmalade
Tea or coffee with milk

LUNCH

Tomato juice
Prawn, shrimp or crab salad
3 Energen rolls with butter
Stewed apple

DINNER

1 oz. grilled bacon, 1 oz. liver or kidney, with tomatoes and mushrooms as grill
3 oz. stewed plums with 3 tablespoonsful milk pudding
2 Energen rolls with butter
Small portion of cheese



If you would like advice on any beauty problem, write, enclosing a stamped and addressed envelope, to Chrysis, Britannia and Eve, Ingram House, 195, Strand, W.C.2.

BY

ROSETTA

DESBROW

Budget To Buy More

THERE was a time when it was a social crime to disclose one's poverty, but few people are embarrassed to-day by the simple confession "I cannot afford it."

Inflated costs, rising standards and the problem of making ends meet are a constant preoccupation. We worry, sigh and go without, often scarcely knowing what we can or cannot afford.

This hazy outlook on domestic economics arises from spending in a hand-to-mouth, unplanned way. The situation is typified by the woman who buys a jersey because the colour appeals and she happens to have the money in her purse, when what she needs is a pair of shoes. Foresight would have shod her.

Intuition has never yet balanced a budget, yet many of us live by it, rubbing along and hoping the figures will come right in the end, often denying ourselves things we might afford if the vista were clear enough to allow an assessment of surplus.

The way to afford things, apart from coming into an inheritance or winning a football pool is to plan expenditure, but planning for the future is only possible on the basis of what has happened in the past.

This means keeping records. For at least a month write down expenses for the day, without attempting to organise your spending. You can either get a printed account-keeping book for a few shillings, or rule a lined exercise book. There is little difference between accounting for a family or for an individual.

As a guide, a convenient classification would run as follows :

1. Housing : rent, rates, taxes, mortgage charges, repairs and decoration.
2. Food : butcher, baker, grocer, greengrocer, dairy, fishmonger.
3. Household : fuel, laundry, domestic help, cleaning equipment, chemist, minor replacements.
4. Clothing : with shoe repairs and cleaning bills.
5. Personal allowances for each member of the family, not to be accounted for in detail. Individuals, however, should itemise this classification into fares, hairdresser and cosmetics, meals out, and so on.
6. Leisure : amusements, holidays, entertaining, books, papers, magazines, subscriptions, radio, gifts, car, etc.
7. Savings : life insurance, superannuation.
8. Other commitments : income-tax, contributions to support of relatives, education.

The only way to be sure of keeping accounts, is to have a column for every day of the week, and to enter expenditure for each day. It can become a routine as un-missable as brushing one's teeth (I have done it myself for many years), but if you miss a day, it is fatally easy to miss several (as I have found, too).

APART from bills paid at long intervals, like fuel bills, rent and holidays, it is surprising how regular total expenditure can be over a number of weeks, even when you buy things which would not normally recur. Something always crops up to prevent keeping any one week's expenditure lower than average.

After keeping accounts for a few weeks, you have the background knowledge on which to reorganise.

Now it is that one discovers important totals that could be reduced. You begin to see what you can afford after all, of the things that have seemed impossible.

The shock of seeing how much money cigarettes absorb has persuaded some people to give up smoking, particularly when the alternative is clearly seen to be that wonderful winter coat, or the beautiful new carpet that has been coveted for the sitting-room. (*Continued on page 71*)

The Adoption Dilemma

by Len Chaloner

THOUSANDS of people are eager to adopt a child, an equal number of children are looking for parents, yet there seems to be endless delay in bringing the two ends together. Why?

"I CAN'T understand why it should be so difficult to adopt a baby," commented a friend recently.

Many would-be adopters feel the same, and indeed it is a queer, frustrating business, because all the stories you hear are so contradictory. Mothers, for instance, leave hospital with unwanted babies in their arms, ready to hand them over to the first stranger, because it's so difficult to find anywhere to go with the baby, or to get a job, and have the child cared for. Yet the societies for adoption tell you there is a long waiting list and, when your name finally comes up, the endless routine enquiry and examination to go through.

But on the other hand it is said that the hospitals can often put you on to babies straight from the wards, as it were, though the adoption societies claim that this has led in the past to a number of unsuitable and even unhappy adoptions.

How is one to sort it all out?

With a problem involving the lasting happiness and close relationships of at least three human beings, adoption must always be a complex and difficult business. That is one reason, of course, for adoption societies, where people with long experience and training are appointed to help the various parties to make—not a sudden, emotional decision, but a wise and well-considered one that they will not wish to change.

Such work involves a close contact with the would-be adopters, and with that sometimes forgotten person, the baby's mother; for whom often the surrendering of her child only comes about after very serious reflection and in the ultimate conviction that adoption is best for the child.

The first aim of legislation, properly, is to protect the baby; through formalities and legal contracts which prohibit any form of "baby farming," or of taking children out of the country for such unscrupulous purposes. It is tragic that such legislation is still necessary and has had from time to time to be even more tightly controlled to close loopholes.

UNDERSTANDING of these dangers makes the seemingly long-winded measures more easy to accept. The societies are, in fact, anxious to see the adopting parents through the legalities and help things on, once they have satisfied themselves that the arrangements on all sides promise to be happy. For it is a fact that through ill-planned and over-hasty decisions, adopting parents have found themselves with a really unsuitable baby, while others, for quite invalid reasons, have rushed into an adoption which has turned out disastrously for both sides.

Day-to-day living with a small child can be such a different business from the *idea* of adoption. It is, for instance, courting unhappiness all round for a baby to be adopted as a means of mending an already shaky marriage, or of curing the distresses of someone whose troubles would be far better helped by a psychiatrist.

Nevertheless, babies can, and, of course, *are* successfully found through hospitals and allied (*Contd. on page* 69)

A sweater with a difference. The collar can be worn open or closed. Worn with the slickest of tweed skirts. Dorville sweater about 3 gns. at Gorringes of Victoria. Maxwells skirt from Harrods about 3 gns. Luxon calf handbag from Susan Handbags.

Rima's cream, beige and black sweater comes from Austria. Fior of Burlington Street, London, stock it. About 6 gns. Gypsy earrings, 10s. 6d.; de Farr link bracelet, £4 12s. 6d.; gilt snake bangles, 1s. 3d. each. All from Fenwicks of Bond Street.

SWEATER WEATHER

ANY time is sweater time from now till Spring. A selection of distinguished woollies to fill the comfortable and casual role with elegance.

A Braemar cardigan has all the appeal of the classic and some added interest. In navy trimmed with white. About £5 15s. 6d. at most good stores. The warm lightweight Maxwells skirt in a check tweed about £4 10s. at Harrods. Scarf and antique silver bracelet from Fenwicks of Bond Street.

Braemar's classic twin-set, a golf skirt in the finest of tweeds and a new Jowett Jupiter meet as a trio with the stamp of good breeding. Twin-set about £5 15s. at Dickins and Jones. Maxwells skirt, about 5 gns. at Harrods. Felt by Madge Chard. Scarf from Fenwicks of Bond Street.

A button-up neckline and a yellow and black paisley pattern endows Rima's cosy sweater on the right with elegance enough for dressy occasions. Approximately 10 gns. at Harvey Nichols. Silver bracelet, £2 19s. 6d. at Susan Handbags. Coin earrings, 18s. 11d., Fenwicks of Bond Street.

A porch lantern discovered in an antique shop and adapted for electricity enhances the attraction of this entrance.

Light On The Subject

BY CONSTANCE WALSH.

THOUGH most of us are struggling to cut down household expenditure, there is no reason why we should put up with underlighted homes. Thanks to good electricity supply and the efficiency of modern electric lamps, a penny will now buy more light than it would twenty years ago.

The ordinary filament lamps in general use are surprisingly frugal in their consumption of current. One unit of electricity—costing about a penny—will keep a 40-watt lamp burning for 25 hours; a 100-watt for 10 hours; and a 150-watt for 6½ hours. Fluorescent lamps are even more economical. A 30-watt uses a unit in about 24 hours; and a 40-watt in 19 hours—and they give three times as much light as their filament counterparts for the current they use.

In these conditions we can, without extravagance, afford to have all the light necessary to comfort and well-being. The actual quantity required in a room depends, firstly, on whether the lighting is direct or indirect. The direct streams straight into the room from the lamp: the indirect shines on to the ceiling and from there is reflected downwards. Indirect lighting is softer, kinder to the eyes and more even, but on its travels it does lose some of its strength.

Secondly, we must take into account the colours of decorations and furnishings. Dark shades absorb light and rob the room of much of its brightness. To make up for this, more powerful lamps must be used.

IN a room decorated in pale colours, it is a fairly safe rule to allow one watt to every square foot of floor space, when the lighting is direct, and to double the wattage for indirect. In kitchens, use direct light, and allow 1½ watts to a square foot. These figures are for filament lamps—a third of this wattage is sufficient for fluorescent.

In addition to the general lighting of a room, there should be individual lamps which can be switched on whenever anyone wants a powerful localised light for reading or close work. In individual table lamps you will need a 100-watt bulb, and in floor standards a 150-watt. Bedside lamps should be just as powerful, and for dressing-table and bathroom mirrors provide two side lamps of 60-watts each, or a 120-watt overhead light.

Bulb-shaped filament lamps are still the most popular of all for home use—and the cheapest to buy!—but as the blinding brilliance of their filaments is most harmful to the eyes, it is essential that they should be screened so that no one catches sight of them, even by accident.

The naked light from these lamps is harsh and glaring, and it casts sharply-defined shadows. These faults can be corrected by having the light reflected from the ceiling; or by fitting the lamps with shades which, without dimming it unduly, make the light mellow and spread it widely. You can be sure a shade is doing its work efficiently if you can look at any part of its surface without finding it uncomfortably bright.

One way of coping with the problem of glare is to use a group of lower-powered lamps instead of a single large one. Then the light, instead of being concentrated in an over-bright filament, is split up among two, three or more, and is less overwhelming. But remember, one large lamp gives more light than several smaller ones which together add up to an equal wattage. It takes, for example, two of 60-watts or three of 40-watts to equal one of 100-watts.

Bulbs which range in power from 15 to 150-watts are best suited for home use. They are made of clear, pearl or silica-coated glass, but as clear glass gives an unobscured view of the burning filament, it is better not to introduce this type into your rooms. Far safer are pearl lamps which are identical in design, except that the inside surface of the glass is sprayed with acid to make it white and cloudy. The cloudiness helps to soften and (*Continued on page 71*)

Well distributed lighting helps considerably to make this kitchen-dining-room an attractive place in which to work and eat. A fluorescent fitting is used over the sink, while the dining alcove on the right is fitted with a pendant ceiling lamp which can be raised or lowered.

Animal, Vegetable,

and now . . .

Mineral

Coal and oil form the bases for nylon and Terylene, but even the new wonder fibres have their limitations, so be careful how you choose and use them.

BY RUTH MILLER.

WE are in the Age of the Bewildered Shopper—at least as far as textiles are concerned. Fabrics aren't simply good or bad any more—they are excellent for this purpose, but quite unsuitable for that; there are admixtures of synthetic fibres which "debase" and others which "help" the old-established materials, such as wool and cotton. The new, man-made fibres are surrounded by an aura of mystery and of "isn't-science-wonderful"! In our first flush of enthusiasm for these wonder textiles we imagine our scientists to have turned magician and expect them to have solved all our textile problems.

And, quite inconsistently, we shoppers still got through the motions of choosing fabrics by "handling" them. We fondly imagine that the "feel" tells us whether they are pure wool, and that the weight is some indication as to whether they will wear well and be warm. But we might as well face it—we cannot tell what any of the new fabrics will or will not do by looking at them and feeling them. In fact, we cannot tell what we have bought, at the moment, except by—often bitter—experience.

Even skilled scientists often need microscopes or chemical devices to tell rayon from cotton, pure wool from a wool mixture. The need for "fibre content" labelling of at least wool and wool-mixture fabrics has now at last been admitted by the manufacturers. As soon as they can put the plans into operation, all garments and fabrics will bear such labels as "Wool," "Woollen" or "Worsted" if they consist of at least 90 per cent. wool; or "Blended Woollen" or "Blended Worsted" if they consist of 50 to 90 per cent. wool; and "Fibre-blend with wool" if they contain between 15 and 50 per cent. wool. If the admixture is not specified—well, then the shopper will probably assume that the manufacturer has no reason to be proud of whatever he mixed his wool with!

At present, "Worsted" and "Woollen" in many cases only denote the spinning process. When unsuspecting shoppers pick up an unbelievably cheap "worsted" suit which creases horribly and is spoiled by the first shower, they have probably bought a mixture with very little wool—but which was "worsted"-spun.

It will be a relief to know what exactly we are buying. But it will be still better if we know what to expect from the new and mixture-fabrics. What exactly are these new wonders? Of the new fibres there are only three in this country which are in frequent enough use to matter.

First of all, there is nylon, which is (*Continued on page* 68)

Microscopic examination of textiles taking place at the Testing House of the Retail Standards Association.

Two Colour Effect

THIS variant of the twin-set is knitted in two shades. The jumper has a deep welt, round neck and short, raglan set sleeves. The bolero takes 7 ozs. of Lister's Lavenda 3-ply wool in parma violet, the jumper 6 ozs. of the same wool in violet. No. 10 and No. 12 needles are required and four buttons. Tension is 7½ sts. and 10 rows to the inch. Directions are for a 34-inch bust. For a 36-inch, use figures in brackets.

THE BOLERO.

CAST on at cuff of sleeve with 78 sts. (82) and No. 12 needles. Work K. 1, p. 1 rib, and at same time M. 1 st. at beg. and end of every other row for 3 ins.

Now change to No. 10 needles and stocking stitch and continue to increase every other row until there are 186 sts. (194).

Work straight for 2 ins.

Now decrease at end of all the K. rows, and beg. of all the P. rows (all at one edge of work) for 28 rows (36) (158 sts.).

Cast off 65 sts. next to the decreasing, leaving 93 sts. Work on these sts. for 6 ins. (ending K.).

Now at beg. of a P. row, cast on 65 sts.

Work on all 158 sts. and at the same time M. 1 st. next to the 65 sts. on every row until there are 28 (36) increases here and 186 sts. (194).

Work 2 ins. straight.

Now k. 2 tog. at beg. and end of every other row until the level of start of ribbed cuff is reached when work is folded in half.

Change to No. 12 needles and still decrease on every other row until there are 3 ins. rib.

Cast off.

THE EDGING. This is made in 4 pieces, the collar, the lower edge and the 2 bow pieces.

Start with collar. (*Continued on page 70*)

THE CAP

WITH rug wool and No. 3 hook make 6 ch., join in ring.

1st round.—11 tr. in ring.

2nd round.—2 ch., then work 2 tr. in each tr. (22.)

3rd round.—2 ch., then work 2 tr. in every alternate tr., 1 in each of the others. (33.)

4th round.—2 ch., then work 2 tr. in every third tr., 1 in each of the others. (44.)

Work 3 rounds straight.

8th round.—* 5 tr. into next tr., miss 2 tr., 1 s.c. into next tr., miss 2 tr., rep. from * to end.

Cut rug wool. Join contrast wool, either rug wool or 3-ply or 4-ply wool used double, and with No. 8 hook work 2 d.c. into every stitch of preceding round, but working 3 d.c. into the centre of each 5-tr. cluster.

Cut wool and fasten off.

TO MAKE UP.—Press very lightly over a milliner's block or a padded bowl, with a damp cloth and hot iron, and, if desired, attach small bead or button in centre of every 5-tr. scallop.

THE CARDIGAN

STARTING at the lower back and using No. 13 needles, cast on 108 sts. and work in ribbing of k. 1, p. 1 for 41 rows.

42nd row.—* Rib 8, work twice into the next st.; rep. from * to end. (120 sts.) Change to No. 11 needles.

43rd row.—K. 1, * k. 2 tog., but before slipping them off needle, k. again into the backs of these same sts. and slip off ; rep. from * until 1 st. rems. K. 1.

44th row.—P.

45th row.—* K. 2 tog. and before slipping them off, k. again into the backs of sts. and slip off ; rep. from * to end.

46th row.—P.

These last 4 rows form the star pattern. Rep. them twice more.

Now work in st.st. K. twice into the first and last sts. of next and every 6th row until sts. number 136.

Continue on these until back measures 13 ins.

To shape armhole, cast off 8 at beg. of next 2 rows and k. 2 tog. at each end of alternate rows until sts. are reduced to 108, ending p. row.

Finish yoke in star pattern. Rep. the 43rd to 46th rows 13 times.

Cast off 10 sts. at beg. of next 4 rows and 14 sts. at beg. of next 2 rows. Leave remaining 40 sts. on stitch-holder.

LEFT FRONT.—Using No. 13 needles, cast on 66 sts. and work in ribbing of k. 1, p. 1 for 41 rows.

42nd row.—Rib 20, work twice into the next, st., * rib 8, work twice into the next st.; rep. from * to end. (72 sts.) Change to No. 11 needles.

43rd row.—K. 1, * k. 2 tog. through fronts and backs of sts.; rep. from * until 11 rem. K. 1, slip rem. 10 sts. on to a safety-pin for border.

Now work 44th to 46th rows of back once and from 43rd to 46th rows twice more.

Change to st.st., knitting twice into the first st. of the 1st and every 6th row until sts. number 72.

Continue on these until front measures 13 ins., ending p. row.

To shape armhole, cast off 10 sts. at beg. of next row and k. 2 tog. at that end of each k. row until 56 sts. rem.

P. 1 row beyond last decreasing.

Change to star stitch and work 11 repetitions of pattern (i.e., 44 rows). (*Continued on page 70*)

Michael Williams

A CAP to make in an evening from one 4-oz. hank of Wakefield Greenwood's "Caliph" Super 6-ply Rug Wool and a small quantity of a contrasting wool for the edging. Use rug wool 3 or 4-ply knitting wool double. Work on No. 3 and No. 8 crochet hook. The cardigan takes 9 oz. Wakefield Greenwood's "Springtime" Super Botany Fingering 3-ply. No. 13 and No. 11 needles and 10 buttons. Tension 8 sts. and 11 rows to the in. Fits a 36-in. bust.

Cardigan and Crochet Cap

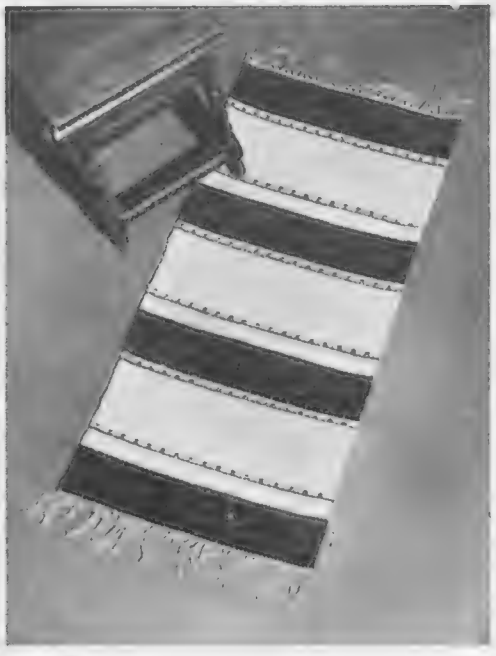
Choice For The House

If you would like to know where to obtain any item featured on this or the opposite page, write enclosing a stamped and addressed envelope to Margaret Sharp, Britannia and Eve, Ingram House, 195 Strand, W.C.2

Shopping by Margaret Sharp

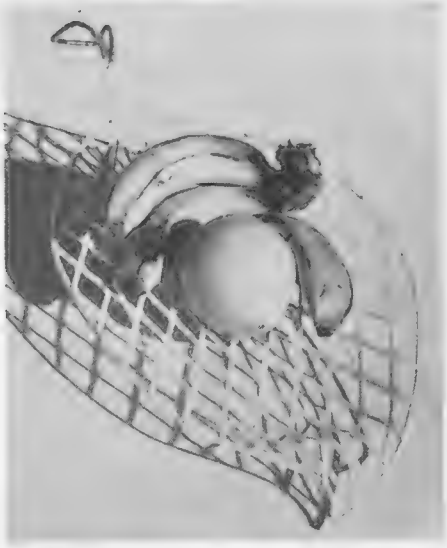
Ideal for the small flat or bed-sitter, a polished wood magazine rack and occasional table combined. The table flap lowers when not required. £3 7s. 6d., Bourne and Hollingsworth

This adaptable lamp can be used either as a bedside light or a wall lamp. The flexible shade allows the light to be focused at the required angle. £2 3s. 9d. from the Army and Navy Stores

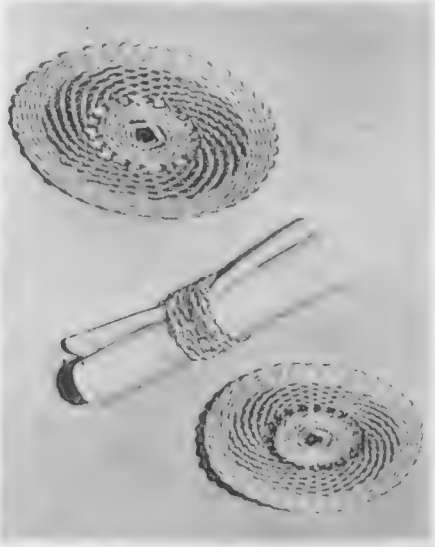


One of a delightful selection of woven rag rugs made by the Norwegian Weavers in attractive colour combinations. The rugs blend with contemporary furnishing schemes, yet as they are reversible, and washable, they are practical enough even for a nursery. They are to be found at Druces of Baker Street in two sizes, 27 in. by 44 in. for £2 17s. 6d., and 27 in. by 54 in. for £3 10s.

Give your dining table contemporary character by serving fruit on a white painted metal trelliswork dish. The leaf-shaped one shown here comes in two sizes, 19s. 11d. and 22s. 6d., but there are other shapes available



Matching table place mats and napkin rings of woven plastic flex, in several two-colour combinations, the mats are 4s. 6d., the rings 1s. 6d. each. These and the fruit dish opposite are from Bourne and Hollingsworth

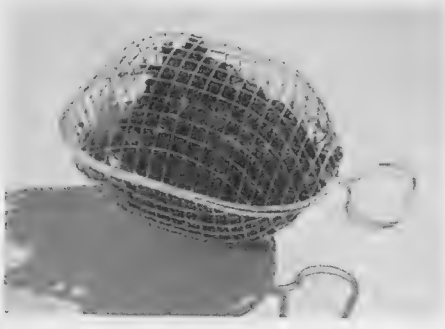


Help In The Kitchen

Left: Miniature cutters for canapes, petit fours, etc., 1s. 11d. the set. The Kenham Puffer, which puffs salt instead of pouring it, 1s. 6d. Combined sardine tin-opener and server, 3s. 11d.

Right: The Dandy mint-sauce ladle drains off the vinegar to taste, 2s. 6d. The Pyrex baster, in heat-resisting glass, for basting joints, or removing grease from soups. Price 5s. 6d.

The Dee-Gee electric bottle warmer steam-heats liquids to a predetermined temperature. Its prime use will be for heating baby food, but it can also be used for warming drinks or invalid's food. Price 18s. 9d.



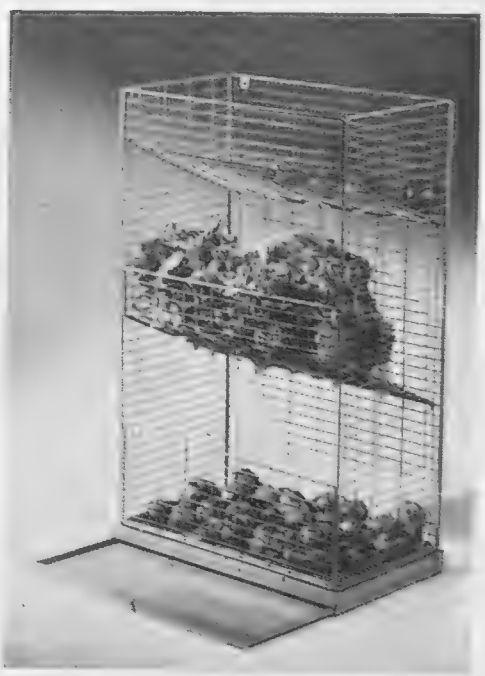
Salad shaker in white plastic covered mesh, to prevent the vegetables bruising. Price 10s. 6d.

The Dandy griddle, a modern version of the griddle iron. The flat side is for frying or baking; turned over to the ribbed side, it serves for grilling. Price 23s. 6d. from Bourne and Hollingsworth

Above: The old-fashioned metal dustpan has always been difficult to keep clean. Now there is one in light, flexible, non-clattering polythene which is easily washed. 7s. 11d. from John Lewis, Oxford Street

Left: This neat-looking gadget is an efficient water-softening unit, which will fit straight on to any bath, hand-basin or sink tap and can be removed when not in use. The price of the softener is £1 19s. 6d. complete with an extra softener cartridge

Right: An important feature of the new Hago vegetable rack is the sliding dirt-tray at the bottom which greatly simplifies cleaning. Enamelled in green or cream, price £2 2s. 6d. from the Army and Navy Stores



YOU CAN'T BEAT BATTER

By

JANET DARBY

BUT you can, you know! In fact, that's just what you must do if you want to make a success of this extraordinarily international form of cookery. There's hardly a country in the world which doesn't make use of batter in one way or another. *Batter*, the French verb from which it takes its name, means to beat, and anybody can do that part of it. It's the actual cooking which demands skilled attention, and I now propose to assist any attentive reader to an acquisition of that skill. Don't mention it! It's that generous nature of mine—which you have doubtless noticed by now!—breaking out all over again! Besides, the more good cooks I help to make, the less chance I have of contracting indigestion.

One of the most famous dishes in the world is *Roast Beef and Yorkshire Pudding*, and any Yorkshireman will tell you proudly that you won't get the real thing outside Yorkshire. It's nothing like that slab of sad-coloured wet flannel that you push carefully to one side of the plate, nor is it the unbreakable biscuit which unnecessarily adorns *Rosbif* in certain furrin parts—you may recognize where I mean by the spelling! The perfect Yorkshire pudding is golden, crisp outside and creamy inside, and well risen. Ideally, it should be cooked in individual dishes, one for each person, so that it can come to the table quickly when at its puffy height, and is not mutilated even by cutting into portions. Here is the way to achieve it: take four ounces flour, a good pinch of salt, half a pint of milk, and one egg. Sieve the flour and salt together, make a well in the centre, break an unbeaten egg into the well, add half the milk, stir first with a fork, and then beat—hard. Add the remainder of the milk a little at a time, beating each addition in well until all the liquid has been incorporated. There should be no lumps, and the surface of the mixture should be covered with bubbles. Now put the batter aside in a cool place, and leave for at least one hour. This ensures that the starch grains have been thoroughly softened before the pudding is cooked.

NOW take your tin and put a very little fat in. Dripping will do very nicely, or lard—half a teaspoon for an individual dish, or a dessertspoon for a family dish. Put the pan into a *hot* oven, so that the fat melts rapidly and becomes sizzling hot. Give the batter a final beating up, in case any of the flour has settled meantime. Then pour the batter into the sizzling fat very quickly, and put the pudding into the oven before it has a chance to cool. Cook in a hot oven—twenty minutes for the small puddings and thirty to forty minutes for the large one. Serve *at once*. Try this on a Yorkshireman, and see what he says.

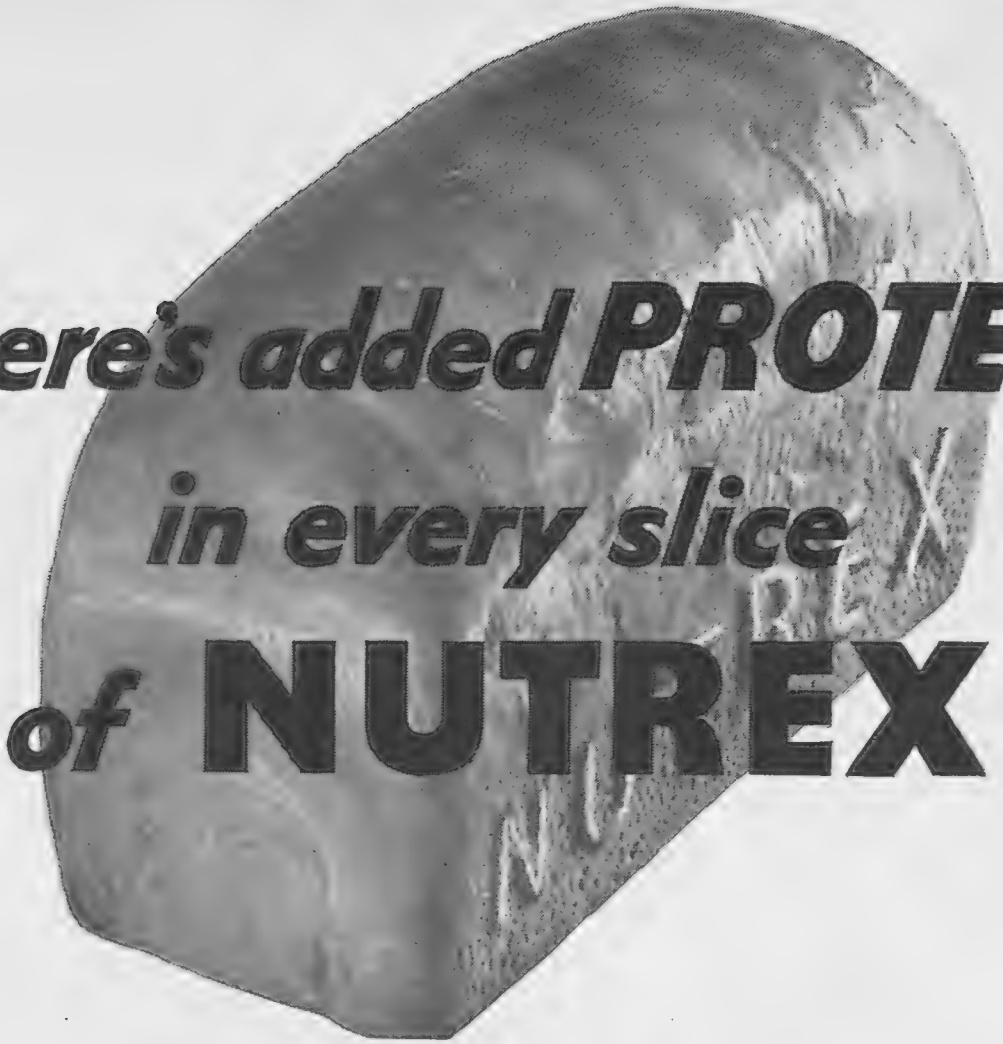
THE batter for *Toad in the Hole* is prepared and cooked in exactly the same way, except that you arrange four sausages in the pan when you put the dripping in, so that they begin to cook before you pour the batter mixture on to them. Thirty to forty minutes for this dish, too. Or, if you are using up cold meat, cut it into squares and arrange them in the pan before you put the batter in. In every case the essential factor is the sizzling hot fat. By the way, the quantities given will serve four, or five at a pinch. Not a very bad pinch either.

You can use this same batter mixture to make *pancakes*, English fashion. After standing the batter aside for the usual hour, stir well, and put into a jug. Then, using a small heavy frying pan, melt a very little fat in it, so that the bottom of the pan is covered by a thin layer of smoking fat. Pour a small quantity of the batter into the pan, so that you have a thin layer of batter. Lower the heat, cook for one minute, turn the pancake by tossing if you have the knack, or by using a spatula if you haven't, and cook the other side. *Don't* allow your husband to practise tossing the pancake, unless you want to redecorate the ceiling! When each pancake is cooked, sprinkle with caster sugar, fold, and serve at once, with a piece of cut lemon on the side of the plate. If you are making *Crêpes Suzette*, for which I gave you a recipe in an earlier article, you will have the pancakes flat, piling them one on top of the other as you cook them, and finish them at the table.

Still using the same batter mixture, any *fruit batter pudding* can be made by partly cooking the fruit in advance, sweetening and spicing to taste, arranging in the baking dish, and pouring the batter on top. Cook in a moderate oven for about fifty minutes, when the batter should be golden brown. Sprinkle with sugar, and serve at once, with cream if you like. A Pyrex glass dish is best, so that you can bring it to the table immediately it is cooked.

DID I hear you murmur! But you said batter was international! So it is, and here is a French recipe, the batter for which includes oil, so as to ensure a crisp surface. Fritters generally should be cooked in deep fat, so that they cook evenly on all sides.

(*Continued on page* 64)



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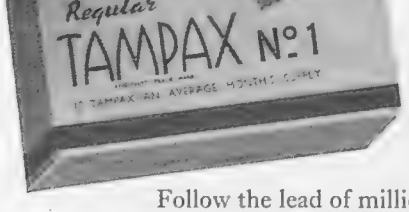

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One Green Bottle (*Continued from page 23*)

He gathered her into his arms and they kissed and sat still, holding each other tight.

"Silly!" he said, rubbing his cheek against the top of her head.

"When we're married," she said, "I shall feed you up with spaghetti and ravioli and cakes and milk and soup."

"Then I'll be huge and tranquil."

"And then I shan't love you any more."

They laughed tenderly together, knowing it could never come true.

"What do you want to do?" he asked her.

"Today? I don't know. I don't think I want to start quite yet. This is almost the best of the day, before we begin it. It's like those elaborate Easter eggs one used to have: so perfect it's a shame to break into it."

"There'll be plenty more just as perfect."

"Hundreds and thousands——"

"For ever and ever——."

"Look," he said presently, diving a hand into his pocket, "I wrote you a very small poem."

SHE took the old envelope and read the poem aloud. They both thought it very beautiful, and she put it carefully away in her handbag.

They went out a few minutes later, and from her bedroom window over the shop Martha watched them walk slowly down the street and round the corner, hand in hand.

"It makes you feel lonely," she said, half to herself. "It makes you feel old."

Leonard, in any case, did not hear her. He was a slow waker. She went downstairs and drew back the curtains in the sitting-room. Then she sat down, and for a long time did nothing but stare at the bottle on the wall. . . .

When Julian looked in one Sunday morning a few weeks later to tell them about his job in a newspaper office, Leonard was out. It was raining and he had taken his customary stroll round the corner to have a drink and argue about politics with two or three old friends.

Martha was sitting in the high-backed arm-chair, darning socks. There was a branch of silver-green leaves in the bottle on the wall.

"So now you'll be getting married?"

"Yes, very soon. I telephoned Elizabeth the moment I got the news, and last night we had a celebration."

"She's a sweet girl," Martha said, "a kind, good girl."

"She'll be here in a few minutes, I told her she could ring your bell. Is that all right?"

"Of course."

JULIAN settled for a moment on the low stool at her feet. "I feel so jumpy," he said. "I can't seem to grasp that it's all settled—nothing to do but live happily ever after."

Martha considered him over the sock in her hand.

"Don't you go thinking everything's solved now. Life's a complicated business."

"Martha!" He twisted round to look up at her. "How can you talk like that? Here you sit, serene as a queen, with security and happiness all round you: it isn't complicated at all, and we won't be either. All the best things are simple."

"No. Not the real things." She dropped the half-darned sock into her lap and looked away beyond him so forlornly that he was silenced.

"Martha, I'm sorry," he began after a moment. "I know everyone has troubles of their own, but with you and Leonard—you can't, at least, have such a thing as a *secret* sorrow."

"All sorrows are secret."

"Even when they're shared?"

She shook her head. "Grief is a private thing, Julian. It's only happiness you can share."

"But surely, with someone you love——?"

"Not even then. It's like—like hearing every detail of his travels from a man who's been to China: you'd have a mind full of pictures of the place afterwards, but you'd never have *China* in your mind, not the way he would, the man who'd been there."

"I see what you mean, of course. But with you it's so clear that your life is gentle and happy, you and Leonard and . . ." he raised his eyes to the branch in the bottle, "your symbol on the wall."

MARTHA turned her head, too, to the green leaves with their undersides of silver.

"I'll tell you a story," she said suddenly. "One autumn, once upon a time, Leonard was invited to a wine harvest festival in Burgundy and he went. It's many years ago . . . and it happened that while he was away a cousin of mine came to visit us from Italy. I'd never seen him, I'd never met any of my Italian relatives, but he was in London on business and he found out my address and came along. He just walked into the shop one day and said: 'I'm your cousin Niccolo.'"

She stopped there, but Julian, intent on the story, prompted her.

"What was he like?"

"Like? I suppose he was an ordinary, dark-haired young man—but that wasn't what he was *like*. He was like the new leaves on the trees and the birds singing . . ." She lapsed back into her own thoughts until Julian roused her once more.

"Did you love him?" he asked softly.

"Yes, I loved him. Only there ought to be another word for it, a big, astonishing word . . ."

"What happened?"

"Nothing happened. I loved him and he loved me. That was all. After two weeks Leonard was coming back and Niccolo went away. I loved Leonard, too, you see, and Niccolo had a wife at home. So he went away."

"You never saw him again?"

"Never. We knew we couldn't. But just after he went he wrote me one letter. . . . I was foolish about that letter. I didn't need to keep it because I learned it by heart, but it was all I had of him, all I would ever have, and I couldn't bear to part from it; and yet I couldn't risk hurting Leonard by keeping it where he might find it—even one day after I was dead, perhaps. So I put it——"

"You put it in the bottle," Julian cried, "and hung it on the wall where you could see it and remember!"

"That's what I did. All those years ago I put it in the bottle. There can't be anything left of it now, but I can still look at it and remember."

"So that's your private sadness," Julian said at last.

"That's part of it. The other part is knowing I *have* a private sadness—away from Leonard."

"You could love them both? Even then, at the time?"

"Yes."

"I don't understand. I almost wish you hadn't told me. . . ."

MARTHA took up the sock again and tilted her needle in and out, in and out, through the hole in the toe.

"Was it selfish of me? Perhaps that was all it was, selfishness and envy. But it seemed to me there was something I wanted to say to you—about happiness, I think, about not asking too much . . ."

The bell rang and they both jumped.

"It will be Elizabeth," Martha said. "Let her in."

In the narrow passage from the door to the sitting-room he took Elizabeth in his arms and held her fiercely against him.

"You will always love me, won't you? No one but me for ever and ever?"

"Of course, darling, of course." She drew away from him, surprised. "What's the matter?"

"I don't know. Nothing. I felt nervous suddenly." (*Continued on page 56*)

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They went in to Martha.

"How lovely your bottle of leaves is," Elizabeth said. "I should like one for our flat."

"I'll give you one," Martha promised, and then she caught Julian's eye and laughed. "If Julian doesn't mind."

"Mind? Why should he?"

"Of course I don't mind," Julian frowned. As if Fate could ever repeat itself. . . .

All the same, as he walked home with Elizabeth in the evening and saw the green bottle tucked snugly under her arm, for a moment he had an impulse to snatch it from her and shatter it against the paving stones. But that, he bitterly decided, would be like expecting to keep the rain away by smashing the barometer.

When the furniture had been put into their flat, Elizabeth spent most of her time there, arranging their books and pictures and sewing some bright yellow curtains. On the evening of the second day when Julian came in, the first thing he saw was the bottle, hanging by a loop of raffia on the wall. It was like Martha's, but not so dark—a clearer, lighter glass.

"You put the bottle up," he said, and smiled as he moved towards it. And then it was suddenly as if the room had turned into an express lift rushing downward : there was something inside the bottle. Through the green of the glass he could not be certain, but it looked like paper.

He peered closer, staring and staring at the paper, the unmistakable paper, inside. Could life then be so treacherous? Could the disasters which overtook other people happen to him, too? It was fantastic and horrible ! It was impossible, and yet . . .

When he spoke his tongue moved clumsily in his dry mouth.

"Elizabeth, what is it? What's that in the bottle?"

She blushed faintly and kept her head bent over the yellow curtain, a little shamefaced.

"Do you remember the poem you gave me one Saturday in your room? I wanted to keep it for myself, even if it is printed later on—I wanted to have the old envelope you wrote it on first for always. I put it in the bottle because—because then I can look at it all the time and . . ." She broke off and looked up, puzzled. "Why is it so funny?"

But Julian did not answer her. He had leaned his head back against the wall, and in the shadow of the hanging bottle was laughing aloud at Fate.

END

The Lead Stealers (*Continued from page* 30)

was weighed down with other business at the weekend.

Another advantage was that they now knew what they were up against. Sir Charles was a friend of the Lord Lieutenant of the county and the Lord Lieutenant had some influence at Scotland Yard. Lead stealing was the latest racket and was organized on a big scale. The gang operated in stolen cars all over the country, were very well informed, took few risks, and knew exactly what they were after. It was the old wicked story of demand and supply. The demand was insatiable and, with lead at £148 a ton, supply did its best to keep up.

IF you wanted to visit the roof of St. Swithin's you went in by the main west entrance and then squeezed through a low narrow pointed door in the wall on the right. Two flights of well-worn stone steps led you past the chamber where the bells were rung, and two more, less worn, brought you nearly level with the bell turret itself. At this point there was a smaller pointed door which led straight out on to the roof. On your right was the crenellated parapet which looked so imposing from the ground; on your left the high tiled slope of the main roof; while underfoot was a thick solid carpet of lead.

It was eerie walking up there at night. The beams and buttresses cast the most grotesque shadows around, and even the vicar had the feeling that there might be bears as well as bats lurking in the darker places. On the whole, however, he was sustained by his sense of indignation. It was tragic to think that thievery should be so rife in that year of grace : that people could care so little about the church that they were only interested in stealing the lead off the roof. It showed a poverty of mind and soul that was worse than any form of material poverty.

But there were compensations in being dragged out of his bed in the middle of the night. If it hadn't been for the lead stealers he would never have known how enthralling the countryside was during those hours. There were scents that he never met by day : sounds too small to notice when there was any other traffic. He came to know the moon in all its phases, the ingenious upholstery of the clouds, the stars, the thousands and thousands of stars, and the gentle breathing of the woodlands as they slept. All this had an exhilarating effect on him, and the vileness of man began to seem a small thing.

HE hoped that the other watchers were getting as much out of it as he did, and in their different ways a good many of them were. But not the little choirboy with the sweet clear treble voice. He was too frightened to think of anything else. Every squirrel was a lion, every rat a crocodile, and he knew that if he heard a real footstep he would just run and run and run. But he did hold on till the end of his watch. The red-haired girl, on the other hand, had a safe comfortable place half-way up a beech tree : there she quoted Shelley and Keats to herself and thought how wonderful love was going to be. Three of the older boys again had different thoughts. One kept sharpening the end of an ash stake with his pocket knife : his ambition was the simple one of spearing one of the lead stealers, preferably in the behind. Another hardly thought of the lead stealers at all : the moths were far more interesting to him and he eventually became a famous lepidopterist. And the third boy was struggling with himself. Always short of pocket money, he thought. Always, always short of pocket money ! If lead's really worth all that, why shouldn't I have some of it?

August was already drawing towards its end when the incident occurred. It was an unusually dark still night and by three o'clock the vicar was almost half asleep in his deckchair on the roof of St. Swithin's. But then suddenly there was a tinny whistle across the darkened green and that was followed by a fiery blob from a roman candle. It was only an instant before the hunting horn blared out in the silence and then everything was on the move. Lights flashed; dogs barked; still shadows became moving shadows; there was the scuffle of hurrying footsteps and the sound of panting lungs.

THE vicar had no intention of missing the fun and he was down the steps of the bell-tower before you could say Jack Robinson. The hunt was away over the green behind the post office, and it was led by Veronica's two Cairns who were making enough noise for all the hounds in hell. The vicar was a long way behind at the start but he passed several stout puffing figures without seeing who they were, collided heavily with George the policeman at Anson's Corner, and was gaining rapidly when he fell headlong over a ditch into a bed of nettles. That slowed him down and the hunt was over by the time he caught up. They had got their man all right, a shivering, frightened little tramp, who didn't know the neighbourhood and merely wanted some eggs for his breakfast.

The vicar wasn't the least downhearted at what had happened. The fiasco had proved conclusively that the village was on its toes; and if they could catch an egg thief as easily as that they could catch a lead stealer as well. It all seemed quite a good joke till the following morning; but then Amos King, the baker, took him up on to his roof with a grim face and there were three big strips where the lead had been sliced away just as though it had been an overdone steak.

AMOS and the vicar kept this discovery to themselves for the time being. They knew perfectly well that it wasn't the work of the gang that had stripped Redridge : it hadn't been done on a big enough scale for them. The bitter truth had to be accepted from what they saw with their eyes. They had their own lead stealer amongst them, someone who knew how they were organized, someone who had taken advantage of the hue-and-cry after the tramp to attend to his own dirty business.

The vicar took a long time to decide what to do. He didn't want to put the culprit on his guard. Still less, did he want to blaze it abroad and make everyone suspicious of everyone else. In the end he just told the Colonel and Sir Charles and they quite agreed that the thing must remain a secret. They decided, however, that they had better find out quietly what the damage amounted to and they took an inventory of all the lead in the village. Two other houses had small strips cut away. They estimated that the value of what had gone was about fifteen pounds.

AFTER this the vicar no longer found any joy in his nightly vigils on the roof of St. Swithin's. The trouble was too near at home, and instead of looking forward to finding the culprit, he dreaded it and the unhappiness it would bring. September had begun now and the harvest was nearly in. It was a season the vicar particularly loved, but this year there was little thanksgiving in his heart. He was in a gloomy mood the afternoon that he passed the fifteen-year-old Veronica dangling her long legs on a gate with her two Cairns beside her. He saw at once that she had been crying.

"What's the matter, Veronica?" he asked. "You haven't hurt yourself, have you?"

She quickly climbed down from the gate.

"No, no, no," she answered almost crossly. "I've just got an eyelash in my eye. That's all."

The vicar looked at her severely.

"I thought we made a pact never to tell lies to each other, Veronica."

"Well, it's you who have broken the pact, not me."

"How do you mean?"

"Pretending that we're looking for a gang of outside lead stealers when everyone knows it's one of us."

"Everyone !"

"Everyone except you and daddy and the Colonel. We're all watching each other now. It's horrible."

"Oh dear ! What a fool I have been !"

"Then you do know that it's one of us?"

"It's both, Veronica. There's the outside gang, then also there is one or perhaps two of us."

"And you know it's more than one?"

"Not positively, no." He glanced down at her frowning face as she walked beside him, then he went on quietly. "If you know anything that I ought to know, Veronica, I think it's your duty to tell me."

"I don't go sneaking."

"Giving witness in a witness box isn't sneaking."

"No, perhaps (*Continued on page* 58)

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not. . . . Oh, I don't know. It's all so difficult. Do you ever go to the dogs at Todhampton?"

"I have been once."

"I've been the last two Thursdays with Paul. Bill Smith and Sam Bowen were there both times."

"Oh well, it's a change from the cinema."

"But they had an awful lot of money to throw about. There! I've told you! I knew I'd feel a pig, if I did. And I do!"

The vicar just stared after her as she ran away from him down the road with the Cairns jumping at her heels.

The vicar took no action either about Bill Smith or Sam Bowen, but he was wide awake when the second alarm took place three days later. It was much lighter than the previous night, with a low harvest moon half hidden by streaky clouds. It was earlier, too, he had only been on the roof for half an hour—and this time the roman candle went up farther, to the south towards the Manor.

There was the hunting horn again, the scuffling of feet in the dark, and the barking of dogs. The vicar was already half-way down the first flight of stone steps when he stopped dead. No, he thought, it may be a blind. I'd better stay here and see if anything happens. He went back up to the little pointed door. From there he could see his empty deckchair at the far end inside the parapet, and he decided to leave it like that. Ducking low to avoid the heavy beams, he went across to the other exit at the far side of the roof, crept down over the carpet of lead until he was in a position to see round the corner, then waited and watched and listened.

The hunt had already moved far away to the south and it was quite still and silent on the roof. He didn't believe that it was a movement when he first heard it; but quite suddenly he knew that he wasn't dreaming. There was somebody on the roof the other side where he normally went, and he was pulling and scratching at something. Bill Smith? Sam Bowen? The vicar wondered. Oh, dear God! Now I'm going to know the worst! But his wits were still well about him. If he went on round the corner by the deckchair it would give a quick alert young man the chance to escape. So he went back the way he had come and approached from behind, cutting off his retreat.

He still hoped even then that he was imagining it all; but when he got to the door, there was the figure in front of him on his hands and knees, and he was so busy cutting and cutting that he never heard the steps behind him. The vicar still didn't know whose back it was. He was within touching distance before he flashed on his torch. Sam Bowen, he wondered? Bill Smith? But it was far far worse than that. When the yellow cone of brightness flashed down, he found himself staring at the agonized face of Michael, the Colonel's elder son.

MICHAEL would have thrown himself over the parapet if the vicar hadn't been pretty quick. But he caught him round the waist, pinned him against the sloping roof until he stopped struggling, and then somehow or another they were facing each other down below in the vestry.

"Well, why don't you ring up my father and be done with it?" Michael was defiant now. "You'd have saved a lot of trouble if you'd let me jump the parapet."

"Perhaps I would," the vicar agreed quietly. "But unfortunately there's a lot that I need to know first. Who's in this with you, Michael?"

"Nobody."

"Are you sure?"

"Quite sure. I just wanted some pocket money."

"What about Bill Smith and Sam Bowen?"

"I wouldn't have anything to do with them."

"Your young brother John then?"

"Good heavens! That kid!"

"You're only seventeen yourself, Michael. If you can begin this kind of thing at seventeen, I don't see why you shouldn't begin at fourteen, too."

"Well, John had nothing to do with it. You must believe that!"

"All right, I'll believe it. How did you get rid of the stuff, Michael?"

"There's a chap in Todhampton, but I'm not going to tell you his name."

"I'm not going to ask it. I hope he paid you a decent price for it, that's all."

"Well, he did, if you want to know. It's the first time I've ever had any money to spend. You don't know what it's like always being short. No money for a beer or a cigarette. Nothing to take a girl out with."

"Who's the girl, Michael?"

"I didn't say there was a girl."

"All right. All right. There isn't a girl. And it's all happened because your father kept you short of pocket money?"

"All he cares about is keeping up appearances. Never thinks of John or me. If there ever is anything over, he spends it on whisky for himself."

"He has a good deal of pain, hasn't he, with that old wound in his leg?"

"Well, yes, I believe he has. But he won't listen to me. I don't want to go into the army. I don't want any of the things he wants. If he had let me leave school and earn some money on my own none of this would have happened."

THE vicar smiled a little grimly.

"I wouldn't say that the Colonel was an easy man to get on with either as a father or a parishioner," he began gently. Then his voice warmed up. "But if there ever was a man who was going to have his heart broken if he knew the truth, it's he. I won't have his heart broken by you or anyone else. For that reason and that reason alone, I am going to keep my mouth shut about this."

"You mean you aren't going to tell anyone?"

"I believe in atonement, Michael. What everyone seems to have forgotten is that there is a dangerous gang of lead stealers about. They may carry guns for all I know. In any case they'll stick at nothing. If they attack us here somebody might have to risk his life to stop them. If that somebody happened to be you, then I'd say that you'd atoned for everything—provided of course that you also put the remains of your ill-gotten gains in the poor box."

Michael solemnly emptied his pockets. The result was nine pounds eight shillings and sevenpence on the vestry table. The vicar handed back the loose change, pocketed the nine pounds, then looked sadly across at the young man.

"It's a deal, Michael?"

"Yes, it's a deal."

"Then get out quickly, and don't ever be such a blasted young fool again."

The vicar waited till the footsteps had died away; then he went to his tool shed, fetched a blow-lamp, and proceeded to repair the damage on the church roof.

The vicar was a very good preacher and generally managed to fill his church. On special occasions such as Christmas and Easter it was always full to overflowing. Only the bedridden stayed away. Harvest Thanksgiving was another of the big occasions and that year it was held on the third Sunday in September. It was a fine still autumn day.

The vicar knew his parishioners and knew what to expect. If it was a bad harvest they didn't take much trouble about the thanksgiving: they saw little point in giving thanks for something that had rotted before they were able to gather it in. That year, however, there had been a good harvest and he knew that every seat would be occupied. The car park under the copper beeches was already full as he went across to the vestry with the bells pealing out in the crystal air. The chancel was copiously decorated with dahlias, michaelmas daisies and marrows; and when he began "Dearly beloved brethren," he saw that they were all there—in the back pews as well as the front. The Colonel had two visitors beside him, then John and Michael by the aisle. Pam and Veronica sat on either side of Sir Charles each with a smart little white hat perched on the top of her head. There were even some men standing at the back near the west door.

The vicar was a little worried about the choir. These nocturnal excursions had rather interfered with the practices. But the choir sang like good little larks that day and there were some fine manly voices to support them in the congregation. The service continued its accustomed course, the Lord's Prayer, the Venite, the First Lesson, the Te Deum, and the Second Lesson. The second lesson was from the First Corinthians and the vicar read it himself. He was half way through it when he suddenly noticed that Michael was no longer in the Colonel's pew. It made him stumble over a word, but he soon recovered and went on. The Colonel obviously hadn't noticed Michael's absence. He was dozing peacefully at the other end of the pew.

THAT empty seat began to worry the vicar as he went on with the lesson. He can't be such a fool, he thought, he can't be going to let me down at this of all times! But then another idea occurred to him and he glanced down towards the west door looking for the verger. He couldn't see a sign of him and there seemed to be rather fewer men standing against the wall than there had been at the beginning.

He never paused or faltered in his reading, but strange thoughts were now racing through his head. They couldn't be so daring, so cynical, he argued. But there it was. You could steal a lot of lead in an hour and a quarter when all the watchers were inside the church singing hymns. They couldn't be seen from outside because of the parapet. And in any case who was there to see them? They could let the stuff down to the ground with a rope and get away with it before they all came out.

The vicar hadn't quite convinced himself by the time the lesson ended. He had to be very sure before he did anything and he wasn't sure yet. During the responses, collects and prayers that followed he was straining his ears to hear some sound of cutting or tapping up above. He heard nothing at all beyond the normal sounds of the service. But now another suspicion flashed through his mind. That new utility van in the car park! He knew every new car in the neighbourhood as well as all the ancient ones. Who was the owner of that new utility van?

He was getting desperate now. If he had had his hunting horn at hand he would probably have blown it there and then. But the hunting horn wasn't at hand and he didn't see how he could bring the service decently to a close. That was the dilemma: to behave irreverently on the chance of catching them or to behave properly and let them get away. And then another equally disturbing thought attacked him. If Michael had taken him seriously about atonement, if the men were there on the roof stealing the lead, then Michael was in grave bodily danger.

He knew then that he was going to do something. As a start he told the organist to cut out the first hymn and went straight to the pulpit for his sermon. Even Michael's danger couldn't force him to do anything disrespectful to his church and it was his intention then just to cut the sermon very short. But there were some banns to read before he started.

He read them very quickly indeed.

"I publish the banns of marriage between Giles Gilbert Wisdom of this parish and Mary Ellen Farr of this parish. If any of you know cause, or just impediment, why these two persons should not be joined together in holy matrimony, ye are to declare it. This is the second time of asking."

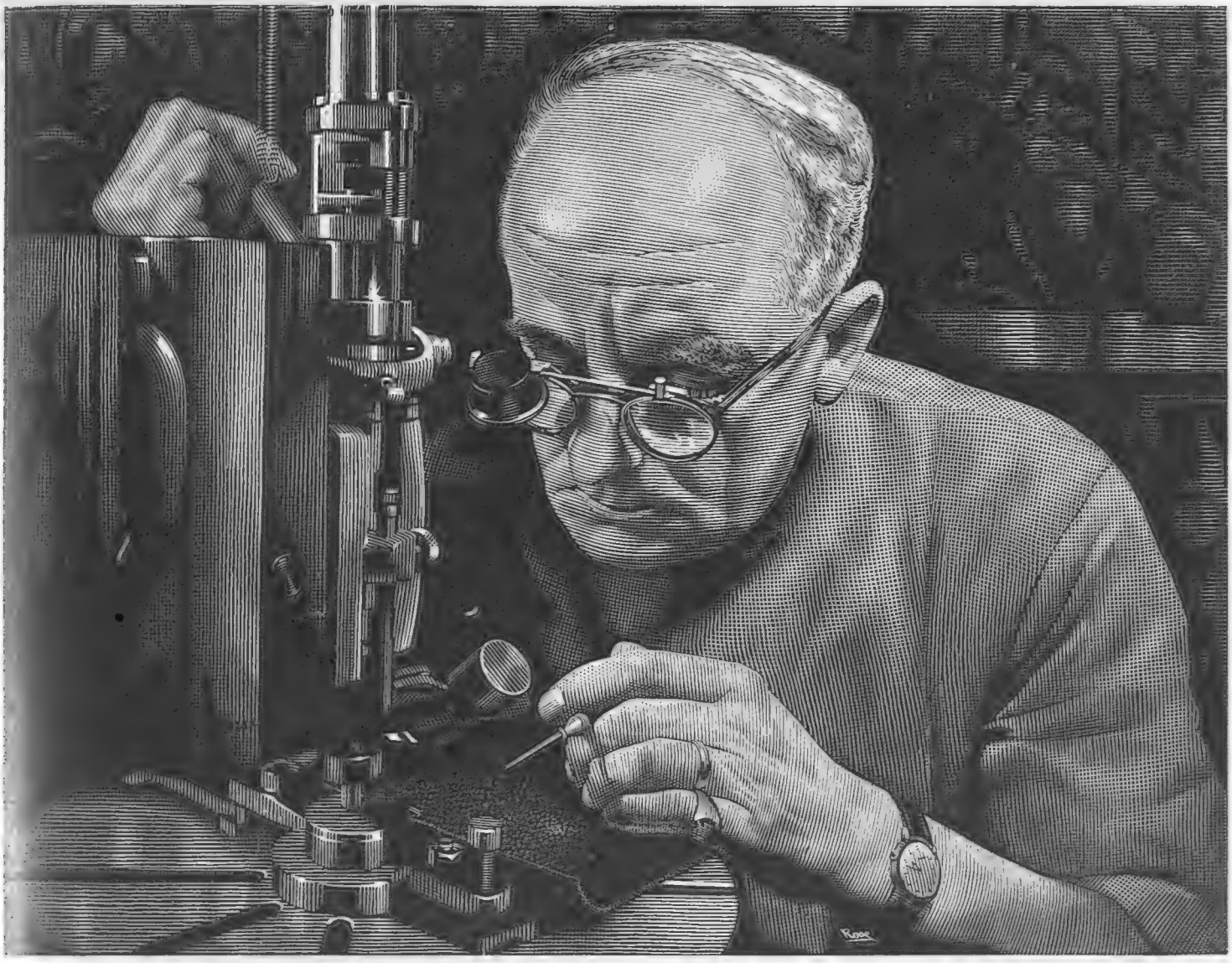
Even then he didn't know how he was going on. But as he raised his eyes he found that he was looking straight through an open window on to the car park. And there were two men there frantically trying to start the utility van.

In a loud clear voice he then went on.

"That is the end of our thanksgiving service. On guard! The roof is in danger!"

THE congregation needed no further urging. After one moment of stunned silence they came pouring like a tidal wave out of the west door. The lookout man whom the lead stealers had posted inside the church was carried with them (*Continued on page 60*)

TIME IS THE ART OF THE SWISS



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The WATCHMAKERS OF SWITZERLAND

like a piece of driftwood, and their full fury fell on the two men who were trying to start the utility van. They were squashed almost flat and offered no further resistance.

The vicar had a bad start to the hunt just as he had had on the previous occasions. But he wasn't worrying about the utility van. Still in his surplice, with Bill Smith and Sam Bowen beside him, he went straight to the little pointed door and there was ample evidence there that something was wrong. Inside on the stone floor, sitting in a heap and trussed and gagged, was the verger. He made a signal with his eyes and the vicar left him there and ran up the first flight of steps followed by the two choirboys. It was only then that he noticed that they had heavy brass candlesticks in their hands.

Half-way up the second flight of steps there was a young man leaning wearily against the wall. The choirboys gripped their candlesticks, but there was no need for them. There was blood streaming from a cut on his head and he just looked vaguely at the vicar as he passed. A moment later they were out on the roof and there motionless, face down in the gutter, lay Michael, while beyond him, equally motionless, was another young man sprawled against the sloping roof.

The vicar took just one look at them, then shouted down over the parapet for the doctor.

IT was forty-eight hours before Michael could give any account of what had happened. It was the utility van that had started him off just as it had occurred later to the vicar. It looked too new and it didn't have a local registration number. So at the end of the first lesson he had put his handkerchief to his nose and walked out. It wasn't the first time that his nose had bled in church and nobody paid any attention except one seedy-looking man near the door. Michael knew he was being watched and he was careful to turn right, away from the car park, when he got outside. Keeping very close to the wall, he doubled round the back to the other end of the church.

When he first peered round the corner there, there were two men smoking cigarettes near the utility van and looking towards the church. But then a farm tractor came slowly along the road on its high wheels and the two men walked negligently away across the green. Michael took the opportunity and ran over to the utility van. He removed the rocker-arm, selected a tyre-lever and a heavy spanner from the tools, and was back at the west door, crouched behind a buttress, before the two men turned round and walked back.

There was still the lookout man inside to worry about and he waited for the Creed when all heads would be turned to the east. He slipped inside then and through the pointed door. The verger, trussed and gagged and very red in the face, signalled violently for him to get help from inside, but Michael wanted to do it on his own. He ran up the stairs and out on the roof. The two men came at him with coshes the moment he appeared. But along that narrow gutter they could only attack one at a time, and he downed the first of them first shot with the heavy spanner. The second one wasn't so easy, but Michael split his head open with the tyre-lever before he was laid out himself.

The vicar had the greatest difficulty in persuading Michael that there was no need to go on atoning for ever. Once it was done—and very thoroughly done as it had been in this case—then one could forget about it. In this way he finally managed to stop him telling his father the whole truth. It was much better so. The Colonel was too strict and confined a man to have understood that disgraceful lapse. As it was, he strutted about like a turkey-cock and dug into his meagre bank account for a really good present for Michael. And when Michael was well enough to spend the money, the first thing he did was to take Veronica to the pictures in Todhampton; so perhaps there was a girl in it after all.

END

For My Thoughts

Continued from page 12)

became afraid. Afraid not only of Henry's love for me, but also of mine for him. Afraid, too, in a strangely urgent way, for Penny, for the warped future she would inherit if we could not break into her heart.

"Darling," I whispered, "we can't give up as easily as this. We've got to fight for our happiness. I love you so much. We can't lose each other—not now."

BEFORE we parted that evening we had arranged that I should spend a week with Henry and Penny in Dorset in a month's time. Behind the arrangement was the unspoken agreement that upon its success would depend whether or not we should marry on the date we had fixed. If, at the end of that week, I had not managed to bring Penny round, I knew that we should put the date on and on, until the time might come when we would have drifted irrevocably apart.

It was for this reason that I alternately wished for the swift passage of the intervening days, and yet feared their passing. It was perhaps for this reason also that the love I felt for Henry grew larger and larger in my heart.

I arrived at Weymouth in the evening. Henry met me at the station in the car, and we drove to his home beneath a darkening sky. I was charmed with the house. It had been modernized, and I warmed to the comfortable, chintzy furniture, the book-lined walls. Henry showed me around with obvious pride.

Going from room to room I glimpsed the happiness that the future could hold.

We did not discuss Penny—she was in bed when I arrived—until after dinner, when we were sitting in the lounge. Then Henry's mood seemed to change. I sensed that he was worried—more worried than when I had last seen him. Immediately Penny's name was mentioned a gulf seemed to open between us. At last I asked if anything further was wrong. He shook his head in a way I didn't find very convincing.

"But I'm sure there is something," I urged.

"Yes," he said at last. "There is—something I haven't told you about yet. It's difficult to explain, and you'll probably think I'm being silly unless you see for yourself. In the morning I'll show you."

ON the following day, Penny had left the breakfast table ten minutes when I heard her footsteps re-pass the door en route for the stairs. After a few moments had elapsed Henry folded his newspaper and rose to his feet.

"Follow me," he said quietly, "but try not to make a noise."

I went with him up two winding flights of steps to the attic. The door outside which he halted was closed, but it was an old, ill-fitting door, and light streamed through an inch-wide vertical crack where the door did not fit flush against the frame. Henry pressed himself against the wall in such a manner that his eyes were level with the crack. Then he stood back, and indicated that I should take up a position where he had been standing.

I found that I could see quite clearly into a small, low-ceilinged room, which seemed a repository for the accumulated relics of many years, which were scattered in forlorn disorder over the floor.

But the far corner of the room was apart in character from the rest. An old-fashioned wardrobe stood there, a black trunk, and unexpectedly, a papier-mâché dressmaker's model. All had been kept dusted, and a space around them was clear.

IN that corner was Penny. The door of the wardrobe was open, revealing two neatly hung rows of dresses. Penny was taking them out, one by one, and holding them against her. Eventually she selected an elaborate shaded tulle evening gown. As she slipped it from the hanger sequins sparkled in the morning sunlight. Then Penny draped the dress over the model. When she stepped back, and surveyed it, there was an expression in her brown, wonderful eyes that made my heart leap into my throat.

I turned, and stared at Henry. He motioned me downstairs. In the lounge he paced the carpet in agitation.

"She's been going there almost every day since we came back from London. I've thought of having the room closed up, of having Elaine's clothes taken away, but I don't think it would do any good. If it wasn't that, it would be something else. . . ."

He broke off, and bit his lip.

"For heaven's sake Henry we must keep our heads!" I cried. Suddenly I felt that all the surface charm had left the old house. "This place has too many memories for her. She's only ten—she doesn't reason, she only feels—and heaven alone knows what the poor kid does feel. When we're married we'll sell the house and move to London. In London we'll give parties for her; we'll bring round children of her own age; and I'll make her like me. I'll make her turn to me from her ghost!"

But by the time Penny went to bed that evening, I knew that despite my resolutions, I had once again failed. I did not know what my next move would be. Sitting with Henry in the lounge that night I felt utterly dispirited.

ALL evening it had rained. In the distance I could hear the sea pounding against the cliffs. The house was half a mile from the village, and I thought bleakly that that half a mile might just as well be infinity. At last the rain ceased. Henry went to the window, undrew the curtains, and stared out at a sky from which the clouds had cleared, revealing a huge, rain-washed moon. When he returned to the settee he looked troubled.

"Is anything the matter?" I asked.

He did not reply.

"I know there is—tell me."

"It may be the moon, but from the reflection on the trees I think there's a light in the attic."

"Henry!" I cried. Before I could stop myself I was on my feet. I ran up the stairs to Penny's bedroom on the first floor. I opened the door, and felt a sensation of profound relief when, in the light from the corridor, I saw Penny safely in bed, fast asleep.

I turned to find Henry behind me. I put my fingers to my lips and closed the door. We walked slowly downstairs.

"I'm sorry, Rosemary," Henry said in a strained voice. "I'm getting a bit jittery, I must pull myself together." He paused, and tapped the floor restlessly with his foot. When he went on he looked at me with sad eyes. "I've a feeling that we're driving Penny somewhere where we can't follow her. If anything—happened to her because of me, I should never forgive myself."

We quarrelled that night. It was our first quarrel, and it was not about Penny. It arose over something quite trivial that neither of us cared anything about. (*Continued on page 62*)

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In my bedroom I cried, feeling almost defeated. Henry apologized in the morning. He was especially tender and considerate. But I knew that during the last few hours we had drawn away from each other. Happiness was slipping from our grasps, and I felt powerless, utterly powerless, to call it back.

IN the afternoon Henry drove into Weymouth to cancel some arrangements he had made regarding alterations to the house. Since we had decided, if we did marry, to live in London, there seemed no point in maturing the plans.

I did not go with him—I wanted to be with Penny, alone. I knew that I had to try once more to bring matters to a head, before it was too late. It was the housekeeper's afternoon off, and so after lunch, when Henry had gone, I washed up. From the kitchen I had a view of the path, and so I knew that by the time I had finished Penny was still indoors.

I went upstairs to find her. She was not in her room. Neither was she in the attic, but the attic door was open, which surprised me. I also noticed something else: the dressmaker's model was missing. That in itself was nothing, but at the time it seemed significant. It produced in me a strange feeling of trepidation.

Probably it created a state of nervous tension that made what was to happen a few moments later seem rather more shocking than it actually was. Returning downstairs, I heard noises from Henry's bedroom. It was certainly not Henry—by this time he would be half way to Weymouth. I immediately thought of Penny. Curiously I opened the door.

PENNY was in the room, but it was not at her that I stared. A few yards inside the door, so arranged that it would be the first thing anyone would see upon entering, was what might, in half light or during a first moment of shock, be taken as the figure of a particular woman. In the broad light of afternoon I was not for a moment deceived by the dress and open fur coat that were draped over the model, or by the hat and veil that had been perched on a large, screwed-up ball of newspaper that was meant to represent a head.

But I knew whom the figure was supposed to represent. I knew the shock it would have given Henry, for whom the clothes held such memories. I knew also—and I think it was this that carried with it the most shocking impact—the calculated idea that lay behind the introduction of this macabre dummy into Henry's room.

When I spoke I realized that my voice was trembling, "Penny," I whispered, "you can't know what you're doing, you. . . ."

I broke off. Penny's face had gone very pale, and she was staring at me. Suddenly her little body began to quiver.

"Go away!" she cried with a vehemence that hit me like a blow. Then, in a heart-rending voice: "You don't want me. I'm in the way and you don't want me at all. And you've taken Daddy away from Mummy. He used to talk about her to me, but he doesn't any more. . . ." Suddenly her monkey face crumpled, and she put her hands to her eyes, as if the tears that were pouring from them were causing her maddening pain.

I gripped her shoulders. "Penny—listen to me!"

"Go away!" Penny sobbed. "Go away! I hate you! I hate you!"

SUDDENLY she twisted away from me. As she ran from the room she glanced back at me, and her eyes were full of fear. Almost before I had time to move she was through the door, had slammed it in my face. I wrenched it open, and ran after her—but she was down the stairs in a flash. Before I reached the front door she was out of the garden, running along the path that led to the cliff road.

I ran after her as quickly as I could, but she was going like the wind, and easily outpacing me. At the road she turned to the left, and after a hundred yards cut away across the margin of scrub grass and gorse that separated the road from the edge of the cliff.

I knew then the true extent of my failure. To Penny I had become more than an unwanted intruder—I was an ogre. For I knew that she was running away from more than the consequences of her trick—she was running away from the person I had become in her eyes. And if her ideas of me were rather the result of her distorted imaginings than of my real actions, at least I was to blame for allowing those ideas to grow—for not, from the outset, having broken down the barriers that separated us by crushing her to my heart.

But by what means might I have succeeded where I had failed? As I stumbled through the grass, with my heart pounding in my ears, the question tormented me. I had tried to be kind—I had tried to be just and considerate; but Penny had seemed too elusive. I had had so little opportunity to show her that I might be able to love.

She had sobbed, "You don't want me," and it was that which hurt. That and the knowledge that I had done nothing since we had met to really disprove that accusation—that the accusation was, indeed, partly justified. At first it was only Henry that I really wanted, and I saw it now. I had wished to conciliate Penny for that reason. It was only a few moments ago, when I had come face to face with the fact of Penny's grief, that the compassion I had felt turned to love in my heart.

WHEN Penny reached the edge of the cliff she disappeared. I was still fifty yards or so behind her, and it was not until a few uneasy moments later that I saw what had happened. From that point of the cliff edge a narrow path ran down to a ledge forty feet below. It was down this path that Penny was climbing.

It was a difficult path, but from the way Penny was going I guessed that she had done it many times before. Evidently she would feel safe from me when she gained the ledge, anticipating that whatever my intentions, I would not be agile enough to follow her. A cleft in the ledge formed a natural shelter from the wind. There, I guessed, she would stay until her father was due home, when she would return, certain of his protection. And then. . . ?

I felt hopeless. The events of the afternoon had worsened a situation that had been bad enough before. I felt that the gulf between Penny and myself had now widened until it was practically unbridgeable. But at the moment there was nothing I could do. If I called to her the sea wind would carry my voice away before it reached her. There seemed no point in following Penny to the ridge, and I felt quite certain that she would be safe. The only thing for me to do was to return to the house, and try to explain to Henry before Penny came in.

I was turning to go when I heard the ominous rumble from below. I swung round, and with a pang of horror I saw what had happened. A section of the cliff seemed to have crumbled, was crashing into the sea a hundred feet below. Penny was falling. I heard her scream as she lost her balance, and toppled over. I heard myself cry out, and instinctively I closed my eyes.

I do not know by what miracle the ledge intercepted Penny's fall. When I opened my eyes the flurry of white dust had subsided, and the cliffside was very still. But there, on the ledge, lay Penny. Perilously near the edge, and obviously hurt, but for the moment safe.

I had no time to lose. She moved slightly, and she seemed dazed. If she rolled over she might go over the ledge, and there was nothing else to break her fall. The cliff road was deserted, and I had no time to go for help. I began to descend.

TO the point where the path had broken the going was easy enough, but then the nightmare began. What footholds there were seemed to crumble away beneath my tread. Every moment I expected to slip, and plunge headlong to disaster. At last I reached the ledge, and looked upward at the broken cliff-face rising steeply against the cloud-swirled sky. (*Continued on page 64*)

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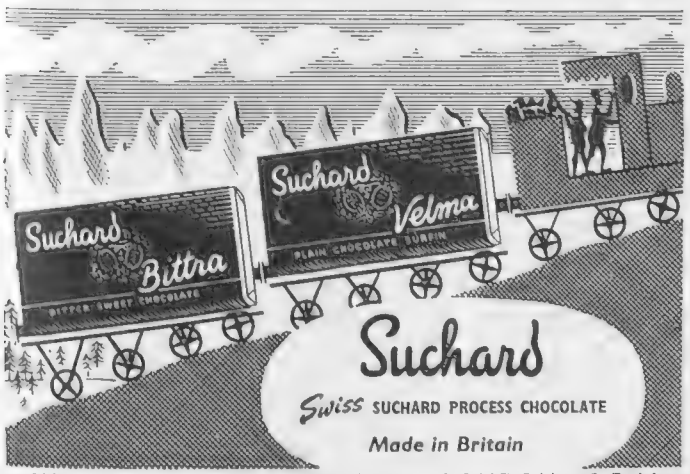

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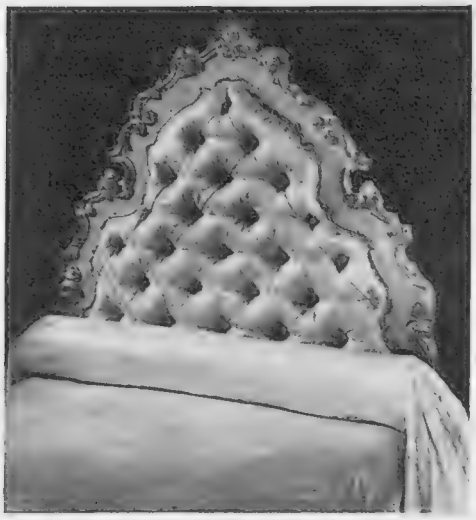

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I felt giddy as I realized the perils the ascent would entail with an injured child in my arms.

I moved carefully along the ledge until I was standing over Penny. She had been crying, but as I drew near her she became silent, pain and terror mingling in her eyes.

I bent over her. "Penny, where does it hurt?"

She pointed to her ankle, and began to whimper. The ankle was twisted and swollen. "I'm going to carry you," I said. "I want you to try to get on my back."

I cannot remember much of what happened during that ascent. Somehow or other I managed to get back to the house, and put Penny to bed. Then I telephoned the doctor. He must have started out just as Henry was driving back through the village, for they arrived together.

I explained as lucidly as I was able. When that was over I felt that a heavy weight that had held me to the ground was lifting, and I must have fainted, for I knew nothing more until I awoke the next morning in my bedroom. I heard Henry's voice, very close to my ear.

"Rosemary?"

I looked at him, and then I remembered my failure. In a sullen flood the events of the previous day poured into my mind.

"How is she?" I asked.

"It's only a sprained ankle," he answered softly, "and a few bruises. She'll be better soon."

"I'm sorry," I said, "I've made an awful mess of things."

He shook his head, smiling reassuringly.

"She—she might have been killed," I whispered.

"But she wasn't. You saved her life. She knows you saved her life, and that you risked your own to do it."

Something in his eyes—a tenderness that was also a look of triumph—galvanized my mind. Suddenly the room snapped into focus.

"Rosemary," he said, "don't you see, she knows you want her now!"

As I watched his face I began to understand, and something rang out in my mind like a peal of joyous bells.

I slipped into my dressing-gown, and we went quietly to Penny's bedroom. She was lying with her eyes closed, and a peaceful expression on her face.

"Is she asleep?" I whispered.

He shook his head. I bent over her, and placed my hand on her forehead. She opened her eyes. There was no animosity in them now—only a faraway tranquillity.

I sat on the bed, and slipped my hand between her head and the pillow. She did not resist, but she closed her eyes. She closed them tightly, and her hand gripped mine.

Then I did what I should have done in the first place. I folded my arms around her, and hugged her closely to my breast.

I turned my head, and looked at Henry. As he gazed down at us he put his hand gently on my shoulder, and there was an infinite tenderness in his eyes.

END

You Can't Beat Batter

(*Continued from page 52*)

Fritot of chicken is a little more complicated, but worth making as a special.

You will need one cold cooked chicken, which can be roast or boiled. Cut the bird into serving portions, removing the skin, and put the pieces into a deep dish. Pour over them three tablespoons olive oil, one tablespoon lemon juice or tarragon vinegar, half of an onion finely chopped, a tablespoon chopped parsley, a little chopped thyme, a little chopped tarragon (optional). Add salt and pepper and beurre manié, which means a walnut of butter blended with an equal quantity of flour. Leave the chicken in this marinade for about two hours, turning occasionally. Now the batter:

Take three ounces of flour, one tablespoon olive oil, a little salt, and half a cupful tepid water. Mix together to a smooth paste, and stand one hour. Then beat one egg-white till stiff and stir it in lightly. Drain the pieces of chicken, dip them in this batter, making sure they are thoroughly coated, and fry in hot fat till they are golden brown. Drain well and put aside to keep warm. Now we return to the marinade. Boil this quickly to reduce, stirring so that the beurre manié thickens it slightly. Serve this separately as a sauce for the fried chicken.

Space doesn't permit of much more, but I must just tell you of that grand Scottish teatime favourite, griddle cakes. This is yet another form of batter. You will want: *1 cup flour, 2 teaspoons granulated sugar, 1 teaspoon butter, 1 cup milk or buttermilk, 2 teaspoons baking powder, 1 egg, a little salt.* Mix the dry ingredients together. Rub the butter in lightly, then make a well in the centre of the mixture. Beat the egg up in half the milk, and pour into the well. Beat the mixture well together so that it is free from lumps, then thin down with the rest of the milk, so as to make a thin batter. If you have a griddle, grease it well with a lump of suet or margarine. If you have not, a large heavy frying pan will do. Grease it well, anyway: then take a tablespoon of the mixture for each cake, make the pan really hot, and pour each tablespoon of the mixture into a circular shape. You can make several cakes at once, turning them when bubbles appear all over them, and cooking the other side in the same way. Pile each batch flat on top of one another; wipe the pan or griddle with a cloth between each batch, and re-grease. Serve hot and buttered, or cold with butter and jam rolled into them.

END

Cage Me A Rainbow

(*Continued from page 34*)

thermostats to be had quite cheaply, and once the heating system is under way, it can quite safely be left to itself.

The intriguing shapes and brilliant colours of tropical fishes provide an endless and absorbing entertainment. In some ways they are a menace, for a casual glance at the aquarium may develop into an hour's crystal gazing when you become oblivious of the world in which you live.

One of the most delightful aspects of the tropical aquarium for the children is that whereas their cold water fishes never, or rarely, have any babies, they can come down to breakfast one morning and find that their stock has increased overnight from, say, a dozen fishes to a hundred.

If you do intend to set up an aquarium, take advice from either a dealer or your nearest club, or obtain a good book (*The Right Way To Keep Pet Fish*, by R. Dutta, published by Right Way Books, 6s.).

But if you want to start from scratch and find out for yourself there are one or two points to remember to avoid disappointment.

Don't get a small tank. 24 in. by 12 in. by 12 in. is a minimum.

Don't overstock. Twenty-four square inches of surface, or breathing area, per inch of fish excluding the tail should be your guide for cold-water fishes. You can keep roughly double the amount of tropicals.

Don't overfeed. Tropicals will only eat what they require and left-overs are likely to foul the water.

Food is quite a problem, but there are plentiful supplies of various worms and other live-foods to be had, and dry-food, which you can buy ready graded and packed, is a necessary stand-by. Fishes cannot digest fats, so if you do offer them a tiny piece of raw fish, don't give them herring. They love shrimps, crab and prawn. So do I, but I can usually steel myself into chopping a minute portion for them—without condiments, of course, although a little salt in their water does nothing but good.

END

Plaques For Posterity

(*Continued from page* 15)

her negotiation of "six flights of stairs." She tells of a "confused nightmare of much mole-skin and sable" and exhausted cries of "*Oh ! Mon Dieu. Les escaliers, vertige, vertige!*" Brandy and vinegar were needed before peace was restored.

Angela Thirkell the novelist lived in one of the two houses at the bottom of Young Street, leading into the Square, Felday House and Little House. They are scheduled for demolition to make way for a model bakery, in spite of the petitions of local residents. She writes about "Auntie Stella" as she knew Mrs. Patrick Campbell, in her book, *The Three Houses*, describing how she would descend upon Young Street with "a swish of silk and a froth and fluff of lace demanding nursery tea or suddenly require a bed in a darkened room as it was impossible for her to rest in her own home."

John Stuart Mill lived at No. 18 between 1837 and 1851, looked after by his mother and sister. This house had become completely derelict until it was purchased by its present owner, Mrs. Christiansen, who has completely renovated it, cleverly combining present-day comforts with an eye for essential character. Mrs. Christiansen is a moving spirit in the formation of the new "Kensington Society," which has the avowed intention of protecting and preserving the essential character of the district. Mill wrote his *Logic* and *Political Economy* whilst in Kensington Square. With the house as it is now furnished it is possible to visualize his setting in the cheerful library with its window over the long narrow garden where he may have paced out his thoughts. Mrs. Mill and his sister keeping guard in the first floor drawing-room with its three tall windows overlooking the gardens of the square.

FARTHER along the square, is an inscription commemorating the stay of a lady famous in a different way. The Duchess of Mazarin is said to have lived at No. 11, which together with No. 12, was one house built in the Dutch style and probably the oldest in the square, dating from about 1690. She was the mistress of Charles II. In spite of his generosity, even after he had lost interest, her extravagance and gambling forced her to leave the square.

Along the King's Road, Ellen Terry is commemorated [by a plaque on a house in which, appropriately, Peter Ustinov now lives. At No. 4 Cheyne Walk, one of the old houses which dates from 1717, a plaque commemorates George Eliot, better "remembered for her immoral life than her rather dull books." She lived only eighteen days in the house before she died. The house, built on land which was once part of the Chelsea Manor Estate, has a beautiful façade. Inside the walls of the first floor landing and ceiling are covered by paintings by Thornhill, who is said to be responsible for the "Painted Hall" at Greenwich.

AT 180 Ebury Street, a plaque records the stay of Mozart. It was here that his sister Marianne helped him in the writing of his first symphony and played duets with him, in what was the long, low first floor drawing-room, half of which is now the bedroom of Sir John and Lady Coldstream.

Other famous women commemorated by plaques on the houses they once lived in are less well served for their houses have either been pulled down and new premises erected, or their homes have become part of the modern commercial world. Elizabeth Barrett-Browning's home at 50 Wimpole Street has been demolished, although 99 Gloucester Place, 74 as it was when she lived in it, is now converted into flats, the tenants of which include two women doctors.

Florence Nightingale's house, No. 10 South Street, is the home of Ingersoll Watches. Appropriately, the home of Octavia Hill, the pioneer of enlightened housing management, No. 8 Fitzroy Street, is now the office of consulting engineers. The spirit of Jenny Lind, the Swedish nightingale, shares No. 189 Old Brompton Road with a Catholic convent school.

Fanny Burney, writer of *Evelina*, lived at No. 11 Bolton Street. She was second keeper of the Queen's robes for almost nine years and an accepted member of the Johnsonian circle. Dr. Johnson is said to have roared with laughter over *Evelina*, whilst Sir Joshua Reynolds was so absorbed reading it at table that he had to be fed.

END

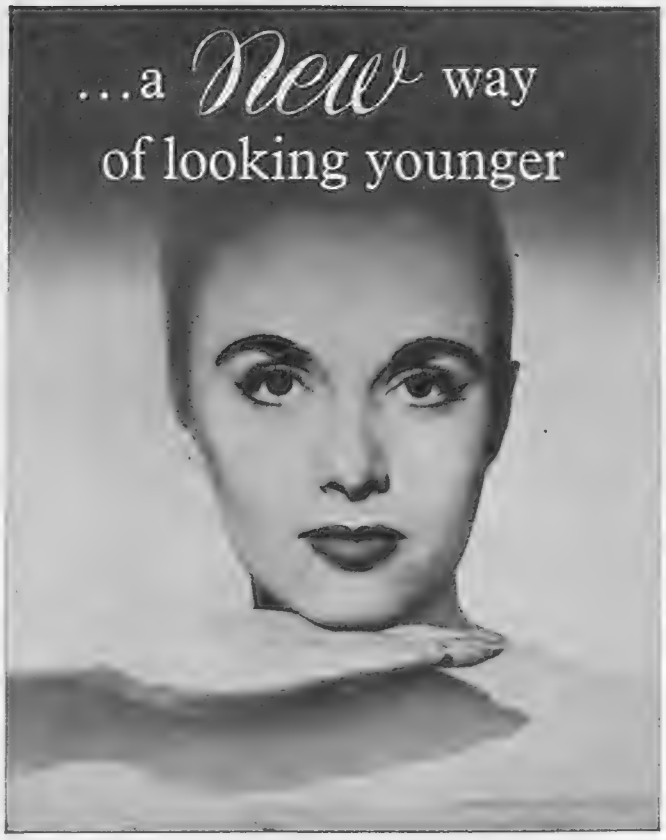
Books

(*Continued from page* 38)

assumes that visitors are interested not only in the conventional "sights," but in food, wine, fishing, shooting, hunting, dancing, fiestas, bull-fights, comfort, and above all the people and how to get the best out of them. An illustrated off-the-beaten-track book they should find extremely helpful.

IT is a common belief that women doctors began in the past century with pioneers Elizabeth Blackwell, Elizabeth Garrett Anderson and Sophia Jex-Blake. Biographing their achievements in **"Storming The Citadel"** (Constable, 18s.), E. Moberly Bell reminds us that medieval MSS. and the earliest printed books, here and in France, abound in pictures of women doctors at work. In Italy the universities were open to women; in the eleventh century there were women professors at Salerno's earliest medical school. After a ponderous start on the cramped lot of Victorian women—a theme worked to death—Miss Bell makes a sound, inspiring study of her subject.

(*Continued on page* 67)



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The Man With Half A Habit

(Continued from page 19)

in the British Museum, promising to be back for tea. He hadn't returned; and she was very anxious about him, particularly in view of his heart trouble. The police made the routine inquiries, and soon established that he had not been admitted to any hospital or involved in any accident.

THE following morning a Sergeant Binney visited the house to see if any information could be picked up there. In company with Miss Walton he went over the whole place—except one room, Goldin's study. This was locked; something which, she said, had never occurred before. The door was fitted with a Yale latch, and she could only assume that the Colonel had accidentally or unthinkingly dropped the latch the last time he came out of the room. The curtains were drawn over the windows, and nothing could be seen through them. Binney naturally wondered if the Colonel *had* come out, and felt that it was essential to make sure at once.

There was no duplicate key available. He reported to H.Q., and was given an authorization to employ a locksmith. He didn't find the Colonel in the room, of course. But there was a note from him to the housekeeper, still in his typewriter.

"Here it is," said Jamieson, handing over a sheet of paper.

Peter studied the letter with interest. It was hardly the product of a properly balanced mind.

Dear Miss Walton,

When you find this, I shall be far away. An unceremonious leave-taking; but I didn't want to distress you by discussing my reason for going.

I have to make up my mind whether to continue living or not. You have always been so kind to me that I can hardly envisage the prospect of an existence without you. On the other hand, I cannot be a burden to you, or stand in the way of your projected marriage. And my heart, as you know, gets worse.

I have just typed another letter to you, but shall take it with me. Whether it will ever be posted depends on the result of my self-communion in some distant solitude.

"Fairly definite, isn't it?" he commented. "Go on."

"Well, in view of that letter there was nothing much to be done beyond circularizing a description of Goldin. Miss Walton remained very anxious, of course, and made rather a nuisance of herself, continually ringing the station to ask if there was any news. Then, this lunchtime, the second letter came along. She notified Sergeant Binney at once."

The letter which had been posted in Windermere was short. In it Goldin stated merely that he had decided to end everything, and hoped that Miss Walton would not think ill of him for doing so. The signature, though shaky, was quite legible.

"You've checked this signature?" asked Peter.

"Yes. Our expert is satisfied that it's genuine." Jamieson frowned. "Everything seems quite in order. I can't think what's bitten you, Mr. Trevor. Just because Goldin had slight bruising of one wrist."

"And half a habit, Jimmie. Don't forget that. I'd like to take a look at his house. Is it too late to go tonight?"

"Not if you insist," said Jamieson dourly.

SYBIL WALTON was a big, strongly built woman, with a pleasant, intelligent face. As she ushered the unexpected visitors into the comfortable lounge, she showed a certain amount of resentment at being dragged out of bed to admit them.

"What's the idea?" she asked, when Jamieson had explained that Mr. Trevor wanted to look round the house.

"Routine," he grunted.

"Seems strange to me. Especially at this time of night. Couldn't you have waited until morning?"

"We could," said Peter smoothly, "but it would have meant upsetting my plans. I'm due up in Ambleside tomorrow."

"You mean—in connection with the Colonel?"

"No. Just fishing. An interrupted holiday. I hope to finish with the Colonel tonight."

"I'm afraid I don't understand. Is something wrong?" Miss Walton grew a little perturbed. "The local sergeant came round this afternoon, and sealed up the Colonel's study. And now you're here. Why?"

"Just to make sure of things," explained Peter enigmatically. "You see, I've more than a suspicion that your late employer was murdered."

"Oh, surely not! He was such a nice gentleman. Everybody liked him. Who would want to kill him?"

"That's precisely what I've got to find out."

"I can't imagine such a thing happening. Besides, what about the two notes he wrote to me?"

"I think those were very clever, indeed. Jimmy, would you mind telling Miss Walton why I decided that Colonel Goldin didn't commit suicide? I'll be back in a few minutes."

WITH a grin at Jamieson's puzzled face, Peter hurried out of the lounge. He didn't expect to be long. If he didn't find what he sought straight away, he wasn't likely to find it at all.

It was easy to identify Goldin's study which had been sealed, at his request, by the police. He broke the seals and unlocked the door with one of the Colonel's keys, then stood at the entrance for a moment, looking round eagerly.

The room was rather cluttered and untidy, with books and papers scattered about. Some shelves on one wall held a varied assortment of articles which bore witness to their late owner's interest in criminology—bottles which had held poisons, police truncheons and handcuffs, knives and "blunt instruments" that had killed—each neatly labelled and bearing a reference number.

After one glance, Peter paid no further attention to these. He crossed the room to the flat-topped desk near the window and studied the typewriter which stood on it. He smiled gently as he saw what he wanted to see, walked out without troubling to close the door behind him, and went upstairs.

Goldin's bedroom, in contrast to his study, was meticulously tidy; toilet articles neatly arranged on the dressing-table, clothes on hangers, trees in shoes. Not a crease showed in the embroidered bedspread. The wash-hand basin was scrupulously clean, soap and towels just so. Peter recognized the handiwork of the diligent housekeeper.

AND he recognized something else. The rather ornate bedstead was of wood, with carved panels at the head and foot. One of the fluted columns which supported the panel at the head showed some slight scratches. He knew exactly what had caused these.

Whistling something which might or might not have been "Comin' Through The Rye," he walked slowly downstairs and rejoined the others in the lounge. Both looked at him inquiringly.

"Yes," he said. "Not a shadow of doubt about it. Colonel Goldin was murdered."

Sybil Walton uttered a little moan.

"Oh, it can't be so!" she murmured. "You must be mistaken!"

"Hasn't Inspector Jamieson told you why I felt sure of it before?"

"He's told me there was some sort of bruising of the wrist. I can't see what that means. You don't even know what caused it."

"I do. I guessed it at the time, and now I've found proof. The Colonel was handcuffed to his bed upstairs for the best part of a week. His right hand. That's why he couldn't bite those nails."

"Good God!" exploded Jamieson.

"Unusual state of *(Continued on page 68)*

I'M puzzled by Philip Hamburger's **"J.P. Marquand, Esquire"** (Hale, 8s. 6d.). It purports to be a portrait of that successful U.S. author "in the form of a novel," related by a pressman sent to interview him; but reads factually enough, with nice touches of humour, as in J.P.'s present of tropical fish to his first wife's mother in socially frigid Boston. When, puzzled, she asked: "Why tropical fish, John?" he replied, "It seemed a bit chilly up here." Admirers of Marquand's novels should enjoy this close-up written with *New Yorker* zip.

MANY of Rumer Godden's novels reveal an acute sensitivity to Eastern scene and character. **"Kingfishers Catch Fire"** (Macmillan, 12s. 6d.) is about a young widow with two children who goes to live in a Kashmir village and gets caught up in the local rivalries of Sheikhs and Dārs which ultimately involve daughter Teresa in a fight with her children. By the time Sophie achieves mutual understanding—"each kept their distance because each now knew their place"—love in the person of Toby is at the door, bidding her come away. I found this an exquisite story of native life and background and white relationships.

SOUTH AFRICA is the setting of Joyce Collin-Smith's **"Locusts And Wild Honey"** (Barrie, 12s. 6d.). An old man, son of an 1812 settler from Holland who became a Backveld Boer, looks back over the life of his family to the days of the great treks, the coming of the British, with a balanced view of rival whites and natives. A leisurely, admirably written first novel with something of the appeal of Olive Schreiner's *Story Of An African Farm*.

FOUR of Doris Lessing's short novels—**"Five"** (Michael Joseph, 12s. 6d.)—are also about South Africa; their themes: gold-lust in the goldfields, a cultured young couple's reactions to a new life in Southern Rhodesia, rivalry between a white and coloured boy growing up together, a gifted, ambitious young native who goes from kraal compound to city to better his lot, as in Paton's *Cry, The Beloved Country*. She has a direct, vigorous attack which drives the stories home and makes them memorable, though sometimes she subjugates character to political bias.

PATRICK HAMILTON'S bias is in despising his characters and hitting them off perhaps a little too easily; one longs to know what they in turn might think of him. **"Mr. Stimpson And Mr. Gorse"** (Constable, 12s. 6d.) are a Reading estate-agent and plausible lay-about crook who hobnob in a local saloon bar with a retired major and sporty colonel's widow. The drinks are not so friendly when Gorse sets out to bypass the others and trick and fleece Mrs. Plumleigh-Bruce. A pity, because she has to leave friendly Reading and hide her shame in Worthing; but an amusing, if somewhat squalid, story.

WARREN EYSTER'S **"Far From The Customary Skies"** (Wingate, 12s. 6d.) is the tense, high-pitched tale of the Pacific war in a U.S. destroyer—action, guns, blood, brutality, humour, sex, slang, a fellow who tells dirty stories, another who reads *Romeo and Juliet*, a third who paints, and on through the whole gamut of U.S. toughness. The characters can be heroes or gorillas; the pace and pulse of the life aboard are terrific. Thank heaven your son isn't a U.S. sailor, Mrs. Worthington.

YOU know the kind of story that lilts easily along, with everything in it but psychological depth, until it hypnotizes you? **"A Tale Of Two Worlds"** (Chapman & Hall, 15s.), by Georgina Sime and Frank Nicholson, is that—680 fat pages of it. It portrays a Vienna family, branching from the marriage of a gipsy fiddler and well-born lady in the 1890s, which emigrates to Montreal. The two worlds are speciously presented, the characters easy to like. It could be cut by half, but would that please the gourmands who crave novels the size of Bibles, to live in for a month?

OXFORD youth, friendship, romantic love . . . I got a faint, haunting scent of Sir Compton Mackenzie's *Guy And Pauline* in Mary Crawford's **"Itself To Please"** (Cape, 12s. 6d.), but, alas, the riverside idyll became an affair with a married woman, a most annoyed husband discovering the pair in bed. It is a touching story, all the same, written in a style youth will like.

THE strange things that can happen to a small group of passengers on a ship sailing to the Cape, Australia, the Pacific, Colombo, dropping a load of machinery on the Tanganyika coast *en route*, and ending up with a storm and a fire in the hold! I'm not sure that Humfrey Jordan has used all the dramatic possibilities in **"Overdue—Arrived"** (Hodder & Stoughton, 10s. 6d.), but it takes one on an enjoyable voyage.

DAVID WALKER has certainly used all the humorous possibilities of a much-married U.S. business man's visit to the Highlands in **"Digby"** (Collins, 10s. 6d.). His wife had summed up "barbarous" Scotland as "bannocks and haggis and porridge, and those self-righteous prigs of people." She forgot the seductive Fionas—but Digby didn't. Solo, he had a screaming time. So will the reader.

OTHER books recommended for reading include: **"The Young Rector,"** by J. H. B. Peel (Arthur Barker, 12s. 6d.). **"The Orchid House,"** by P. Shand Allfrey (Constable, 12s. 6d.). **"A Thousand Witnesses,"** by George Beardmore (Macdonald, 9s. 6d.). **"The Cage,"** by Sydney Horler (Robert Hale, 9s. 6d.). **"The Promised Land,"** by W. Townend (Rich & Cowan, 9s. 6d.). **"Scalpel,"** by Horace McCoy (Arthur Barker, 12s. 6d.).

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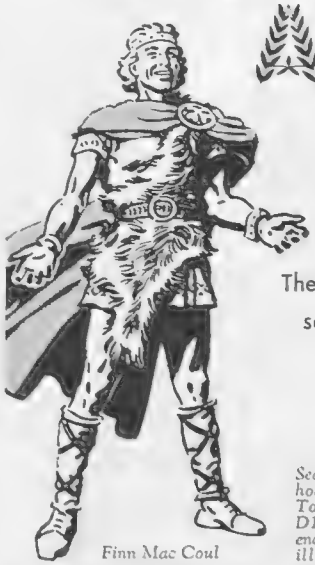

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affairs, wasn't it? But you'll find the scratches on the wood made by the handcuffs. I suppose I'd better give you my reconstruction of the whole affair, and Miss Walton can tell me when I go wrong."

PETER felt in his pockets and snapped his fingers irritably. Recognizing the symptom, Jamieson hurriedly offered him a cigarette.

"Thanks, Jimmy. Remind me to buy some when we leave." He turned back to the housekeeper. "You're a trained nurse. You've been taught how to lift patients. And the Colonel was so thin and light that I'm sure you didn't have any difficulty in handling him."

"I don't know what you're talking about, Mr. Trevor—or whatever your name is."

"Oh, come, now! Don't let's be awkward. Everything's quite clear. Except your motive—and I think I can make a pretty good guess at that. The usual, old-fashioned greed, wasn't it? A will in your favour, so long as you remained in his employ. But you wanted to get married and leave him, and he would certainly alter his will if you did. Of course, if he happened to die before he could do this——"

"I'm glad you said guess," interrupted Miss Walton steadily. "I've never heard such nonsense."

"Ignore it if you don't approve of it," agreed Peter airily. "We'll leave guesswork and get down to facts. And the first is that you evolved a really clever scheme. Almost foolproof. I'm quite ready to admit that you've been exceptionally unlucky."

HE paused. There was no trace of expression on Sybil Walton's face. Jamieson was watching him anxiously.

"It was a simple matter to dope the Colonel, wasn't it?" he went on. "And to keep him half-doped all the time so that no one suspected his presence in the house. Your next problem was not so simple. You tackled it in what I considered a really masterly fashion.

"You had to persuade the police that your employer had left of his own free will, and also to prepare for the suicide which was to follow. That first letter you typed was admirable, and the arrangements you made for the finding of it could hardly have been bettered. The fact that it was still in the typewriter explained why it wasn't signed. And the locked study served a double purpose. You put the Colonel there while you showed Sergeant Binney round the house, then carried him back to his room when the sergeant went off for authorization to open the door—and find the letter. Very clever, indeed, in my opinion. Because if you were supposed to know of its existence, you couldn't very well have notified the police that Goldin was missing."

Sybil Walton gave a barely perceptible shrug.

"I think," she said softly, "you must have a very vivid imagination."

"Still denying it?" queried Peter. "Well, it doesn't really matter. Let's go on. Your next task was to persuade your invalid to sign the second letter. That was absolutely essential—and it isn't too easy to get an authentic signature to a suicide note. Judging by the condition of the body, I should say you starved him until, still half-doped, he was ready to do anything you said."

"And then, according to you," she sneered, "I killed him? How?"

"Guesswork again, I'm afraid. But I'm pretty sure he'd be taking some form of digitalis for his heart trouble, and I'm equally sure that you, with your training, know that an overdose of the drug will cause heart failure just as certainly as the lack of it."

Jamieson cleared his throat. "Any evidence of the overdose, Mr. Trevor?"

"Not yet. But I asked for an analysis. It shouldn't take very long."

Sybil Walton's mouth twitched a little.

"You're trying to build up a false case against me," she said hurriedly. "Even if digitalis is found, you've no proof that I administered it."

The Man With Half A Habit

"How right you are!" Peter nodded approvingly. "The whole thing cleverly thought out in every detail—except one, which I'll come to in a moment. Let me finish my reconstruction first.

"DURING the week it took you to persuade the Colonel to sign the suicide note, you made sure that the police knew you had not left home. You intended his body to be found a long way off, to avoid any possible suspicion that you might be even remotely connected with his death. For this purpose the Lake District was admirable. And you knew it well; probably you could visualize the very place on Windermere—where the road ran near the water, making your task quite easy.

"That's about the lot, I think. When you'd killed Goldin, you carried his body out to his car under cover of darkness. You drove up north through the night, dumped the body in the lake, posted the suicide note, and returned—in good time to ring the police again and ask if they'd any news."

The housekeeper stirred uneasily in her chair.

"You must be crazy!" Her voice rose, shrill and unsteady. "Making such wild accusations without a shred of proof!"

"Oh, I've found proof," said Peter gently. "Curious how an elementary precaution can be overlooked, isn't it? You forgot to clean the typewriter keys. Or perhaps you didn't realize that you'd left your fingerprints on them, proving conclusively that you, and not Colonel Goldin, typed those two letters. It may even be you felt so safe that you didn't bother——"

"Damn you!" Sybil Walton lost control completely now. "You cunning devil! You——"

"Isn't he?" grunted Jamieson affectionately, laying a heavy hand on her shoulder.

END

Animal, Vegetable And Now Mineral (*Continued from page 47*)

an American invention and is a generic term for the first synthetic fibre made entirely from mineral sources.

The third, least important, of the three fibres is Ardil, also made by I.C.I. It is a by-product of margarine, made from groundnuts. It is never used on its own but only as an admixture to wool and cotton. A seventy per cent wool or cotton and thirty per cent Ardil fabric wears as well and should be cheaper than "pure" cloth of equal strength.

Though their chemical construction differs greatly, from the consumers' point of view nylon and Terylene are very much alike. Their main advantages are their great strength and lightness, their abrasion-resistance, their inability to stretch or shrink. They dry quickly, need little ironing, and only coagulate even if in prolonged contact with an open flame. An admixture of either with wool will greatly strengthen the material. The more of the synthetic in the mixture, the better the chances of a long life under strain—for instance in boys' shorts.

Mixtures of nylon or Terylene with wool wash and dry-clean as wool, but must be dyed with care. Home-dying is not recommended of anything containing these synthetics; and must not be boiled.

BOTH nylon and Terylene are combined with cotton. Here the reason is mainly to give "novelty finishes" and to reduce cotton's tendency to crease. But cotton mixtures are a mixed blessing. Cotton-nylon (or Terylene) may score over pure cotton in appearance—it will look silky—but in practice pure cotton or the pure synthetic are better.

It is true both cotton and the synthetics can stand hot water, rubbing and scrubbing, and neither nylon nor Terylene loses strength when wet any more than does cotton. But when it comes to ironing, there is a dilemma: cotton wants a hot iron, while the synthetics *must* have a cool iron, or they shrink or even melt. However, most good mixtures are so "finished" that even a cool iron, plus patience and skill, will produce good results. But as neither nylon or Terylene should be boiled, white mixtures are definitely of no use for anything which really gets dirty. It is as well to remember when buying these mixtures (or the unadulterated synthetic) that both nylon and Terylene are made into garments by good and by not-so-good manufacturers, just like anything else we buy!

Probably the new fibres' only positive disadvantage is their poor absorbency. The very reason which makes them quick-drying—they are water-repellant and non-porous—also makes them feel "sticky" on hot days. They do not absorb body-humidity and perspiration, nor can air get through the fibre. The non-absorbency does not always matter quite so much in *wool* mixture cloth, because wool is so highly absorbent that it offsets the synthetic's deficiency in this respect—at least for many purposes. But in cotton mixtures, and, of course, in pure nylon or Terylene fabric, it is rather important to bear this poor absorbency in mind when shopping, say, for children's or sports clothes. If the fabric is loosely woven or the open-mesh type, air can get through and perspiration can get "out"; but closely woven synthetic mixtures and pure synthetics can be most uncomfortable!

PURE nylon and pure Terylene are, of course, absolutely ideal for travelling, for girls in bed-sitters without clothes-line; for grass-widow husbands and bachelors; and for children's *loose* frocks (and they will not go up in flames!). If washed frequently and soon after wearing, dirt literally rolls off, and the garment is very quickly dry. But synthetics must be washed not only frequently but also soon after use. They absorb with difficulty, but what they once *have* absorbed, is practically impossible to remove—especially if it is the oily, greasy kind of dirt. After all, say the makers, we have done our best to make washing and drying a pure joy, so the wearers might do their bit and wash as frequently as we ask them to. Fair enough. But those who do not like the idea of a (almost) daily dip for their dainties, should stick to the traditional materials! Nylon and Terylene are apt to attract dirt when wet, so it is advisable to wash them alone, *not* with other materials.

For home-dressmaking, the new fabrics present no great problems. But synthetics fray easily so there should be a liberal allowance at the seams (French or felled!). Sharp scissors must be used and the machine should be so adjusted that both bobbin-thread and needle-thread run at loose tension.

Terylene curtains are preferable to nylon ones, which do not stand up indefinitely to bright sunlight, whereas Terylene net-curtains are virtually indestructible. But our legs will never be cased in "Terylenes." Though both new yarns are very resilient (they go back into shape however tightly crushed.)

If the synthetics do not come up to *all* our expectations, it is as well to remember that they are very young yet and that we, the users, are really still being used as guinea-pigs. Scientists in laboratories have worked out elaborate tests: there are artificial sunlight lamps which fade fabrics to order, there are water-repellancy and abrasions tests, and there are machines which wilfully tear materials to see how strong they are. But there is nothing quite like actually wearing a garment to test it for suitability!

END

Pursuit Of Summer

(*Continued from page 37*)

Then come the South African ports of Durban, East London, Port Elizabeth and Cape Town.

Thus there are various means of travel which can be combined in innumerable ways, to suit time and purse. One could, for instance, go down on the Round Africa service and fly home, or vice versa. Or alternatively it is possible to stop off at Durban and catch the next Round Africa boat, perhaps from Cape Town, travelling overland through South Africa during the ensuing month. Again there is the weekly mail boat one way and air travel the other, perhaps making up a month's holiday with a fortnight at sea and a fortnight in South Africa.

I first saw South Africa on a wartime convoy, and was so entranced with Cape Town and its surroundings that I resolved to return there, and did so recently on a trip down the east coast on the Round Africa service, with a spell at each of the four South African ports of call. For a leisurely holiday I can think of nothing to excel it.

Durban is a fine modern city, blessed with wonderful bathing beaches, where great rollers come in from hundreds of yards out in the deep water. Surf-riding, a thrilling sport, is at its best here. Bathing at Durban is a delight with its big waves and warm water breaking on to limitless stretches of sand.

East London, another holiday resort, with sandy beaches right alongside the docks has some very spectacular country adjacent to it, and the port forms the natural gateway to the vast and beautiful Transkei country inland—rolling hills and mountains which form almost complete native reserves. Africans can be seen living here in their own traditional and picturesque ways.

Cape Town is quite unique and occupies one of the most beautiful sites in the world. Set on the lower slopes of Table Mountain, a great flat-topped plateau rising 3,000 feet above the sea, there is a cable railway to the top and you can wander over the flat rock of the table-land, in a dreamland of wild flowers and fragrant shrubs. Good roads intersect the country round the mountain, past traditional Boer farmhouses, vineyards, orchards and lovely wooded hills.

The Marine Drive which has been built along the coast for many miles, is one of the most spectacular scenic roads in the world. At times it rises to the cliff tops above rocky bays and wooded inlets, reaching as far as the Cape of Good Hope some thirty miles away. The Cape Peninsula forms the western arm of False Bay which is part of the Indian Ocean and where the water takes on a tropic temperature.

Excellent air services connect the main centres of South Africa. There are also wide-spread train services with one or two highlights such as the Blue Train running between Cape Town and Johannesburg. South Africa's transport, its trains, motor coaches and planes can hold their own with those of any country.

Yes, South Africa does indeed hold many attractions for a summer holiday during the dreary English winter.

END

The Adoption Dilemma

(*Continued from page 43*)

contacts and in this way can become happily adopted by understanding parents.

In the process of having a natural family parents do accept responsibilities that they would not deliberately take with an adopted family. Adoption societies have the responsibility of taking every possible care to prevent setbacks, or tragedies, or "returned" babies during the period before the legal requirements are completed. This is the reason for their detailed check-up and assessment of the baby and his likely development before handing it over.

One particularly happy development in the field of adoption should not be overlooked, though it has come about almost imperceptibly. It holds out unusual possibilities for people who may have reached an age when, having hoped against hope for children of their own, they now feel that perhaps they have left the idea of adoption a little late. They are certainly not "old" or even "middle aged," but they have become emotionally and intellectually a little past the age when a cradle and a pram and all the delightful, but special demands of infancy have an appeal for them. This is a perfectly natural state of affairs, of course, for their own children would have outgrown this phase.

But for these people who still have a real love for children in their hearts, the uncles and aunts schemes have pointed a new opportunity. Some of these "relatives," who have started simply in the friendly, responsible wish to give a glimpse of "home" to a deprived child in an institution, having him at weekends or holidays, remembering birthdays, or Christmas, have found themselves becoming closely attached to the chosen child.

Children's officers' reports in a number of cases have shown that very successful adoptions have developed from such beginnings. With a child of this age no *sudden* adoption could work, for his memories and his loyalties will be too vividly linked to his own people and home ties, even if imperfect. Such a child makes a very gradual adaptation and it is the simply friendly relationship with the uncles and aunts at the start that helps to make the rest possible.

If adoption sometimes seems a slow and complex business at least its rewards can be proportionately great, and if babies or children are worth having, they are worth waiting for. Even nature herself gives us some months in which to prepare for parenthood!

END

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Two-Colour Effect (*Continued from page 48*)

Cast on 16 sts.

Work in moss st. throughout.

After an inch, m. 1 st. at right edge of work on every 4th row until there are 7 ins. from casting on measured on the straight side.

Work 4 ins. straight.

K. 2 tog. on next and every 4th row on same edge as you increased until there are 16 sts.

Work 1 inch. Cast off.

Pin to neck (it should reach only to within 2 ins. off end of 65 sts.)

Now work lower edge.

Cast on 16 sts.

Work moss st. for long enough to go all round from collar to collar.

Now work the bow pieces, 2 alike.

Cast on 16 sts.

Work 2 ins. moss st.

Now m. 1 st. at beg. and end of every other row for 2 ins.

Work 2 ins. straight.

K. 2 tog. at beg. and end of every other row until there are 16 sts.

M. 1 st. at beg. and end of every other row for 2 ins. Cast off.

TO MAKE UP.—Sew up sleeve seams. Sew on collar by the *shaped* edge, back-stitching on wrong side. Sew on lower edge. Join ends. Sew each piece of bow across the join.

THE JUMPER

START at lower back. With No. 12 needles, cast on 100 sts. (108).

Work k. 1 p. 1 rib for 5 ins.

M. 1 st. at beg. and end of next and every 4th row (still working rib with No. 12 needles) until there are 8½ ins. from casting on.

Change to No. 10 needles and stocking st. and m. 1 st. at beg. and end of every other row until there are 134 sts. (142).

Work straight until there are 13 ins. from casting on.

Now decrease at both ends of every row by taking tog. the 3rd and 4th st. from each edge until there are 56 sts. (the same for size 36).

Now make the decreases at both ends of every other row (still on 3rd and 4th st.) until there are 34 sts.

Change to No. 12 needles and work k. 1, p. 1 rib for 14 rows. Cast off.

THE FRONT.—As back, until there are 13 ins.

Now cast off 8 sts. at beg. of next 2 rows.

Continue raglan shaping as back.

LEFT SLEEVE. With No. 12 needles, cast on 94 sts. (102).

Work k. 2, p. 2 rib for 3 ins.

Change to No. 10 needles and stocking st. and work 1 in.

K. 2 tog. the 3rd and 4th st. from each edge on the k. rows until there are 26 sts. (the same for 36 size).

With k. side facing k. 18, turn, p. back. K. 14, turn, p. back, k. 8, turn, p. back.

Change to No. 12 needles and work k. 1, p. 1 rib for 14 rows.

Cast off.

RIGHT SLEEVE.—As left until shaping at top just before the final rib.

Then read k. for p., and p. for k.

TO MAKE UP.—Sew up side and sleeve seams. Sew in sleeves, leaving rib at back of neck open for buttons. Sew on buttons and make loops to correspond.

END

Cardigan (*Continued from page 49*)

Now shape the neck. Slip the 14 sts. at front edge of work on to a safety-pin, and continue in star stitch on remaining sts., knitting 2 tog. at neck end of every row until 34 sts. remain.

Work on these until there are 15 repetitions of star pattern in yoke.

To shape shoulder, cast off 10 sts. from armhole end twice, cast off remaining 14 sts.

RIGHT FRONT.—Cast on 66 sts. with No. 13 needles and rib 12 rows.

13th row.—Rib 3, cast off 4, rib to end.

14th row.—Rib until 3 remain, turn, cast on 4, turn, rib 3. Work 20 rows ribbing and make another buttonhole as before.

Work 5 more rows ribbing.

42nd row.—* Rib 8, work twice into next st.; rep. from * 5 times, rib to end. (72 sts.)

43rd row.—Rib 10, slip these 10 sts. on to a safety-pin for border.

Change to No. 11 needles and work 12 rows star pattern on remaining 62 sts.

Now work in st.st., knitting twice into the last but one st. of the first and every following 6th row until sts. number 72.

Finish as for left front, but reverse all shapings for side, armhole and neck so that the two fronts correspond.

LEFT FRONT BORDER.—Transfer 10 border sts. to No. 13 needles and work in ribbing of k. 1, p. 1 for 160 rows.

Leave sts. on safety-pin.

RIGHT FRONT BORDER.—Work 6 rows ribbing on No. 13 needles and make a buttonhole as before, casting off the 4 centre sts.

Work until there are 9 buttonholes in all with 20 rows ribbing between each.

Work 12 rows beyond 9th buttonhole and leave sts. on safety-pin.

NECKBAND.—Join shoulder seams and with right side of work facing and using No. 13 needles, rib the 10 sts. of right border followed by 14 sts. of neck, pick up 24 sts. over right shoulder and add 40 from back of neck, pick up a further 24 over left shoulder and finish with 14 from left front and 10 border sts. (136 sts. in all.)

Work 7 more rows ribbing and make the 10th buttonhole in the next 2 rows. Work 2 rows ribbing beyond and cast off loosely.

SLEEVES.—Using No. 13 needles, cast on 64 sts. and work in ribbing of k. 1, p. 1 for 49 rows.

50th row.—* Rib 7, work twice into the next st.; rep. from * to end. (72 sts.)

Change to No. 11 needles and work 12 rows star pattern as for back. Change to st.st., increasing at each end of the first and every following 6th row until sts. number 100.

Continue without further shaping until sleeve measures 19 ins.

To shape top, cast off 8 sts. at beg. of next 2 rows and k. 2 tog. at each end of every k. row until sts. are reduced to 48.

Then k. 2 tog. at each end of every row until 24 remain.

Cast off.

TO MAKE UP.—Sew side and sleeve seams and insert sleeves. Sew borders to front edges. Press cardigan well on wrong side under a damp cloth and sew on buttons.

END

Subject To Contract (*Continued from page 16*)

for was five rooms, kitchen and bath with mains electricity and preferably mains water. By this time we had become as sceptical about "never failing wells" as we had about the "mains" water or electricity that were "available nearby." All modern conveniences may be within a few hundred yards yet, for practical purposes, quite inaccessible.

But I must be honest. We should have found plenty of charming "possibles" at our price if it hadn't been for our land hunger. Cottages with gardens of all sizes up to an acre abounded, but we wanted from 2–4 acres, mainly in the form of grass or arable that we could put to practical use. Not only did this greatly lessen the choice, but it added to the complications as well. For when even a modest amount of land is involved, you just don't know *what* you are buying until the solicitors have studied the draft contract. Only then do the various restrictions and conditions—rights, covenants, easements and so on in legal jargon—come to light.

Boundaries and fencing are important, both to determine exactly whether, say, some useful timber in a hedge belongs to you or your neighbour, and in view of liability for upkeep. Neighbouring drainage rights, as we discovered early in our search, matter a lot.

Rights of neighbouring owners to use springs or streams for watering their cattle, or for other purposes, are quite common. You may not mind, but in some circumstances the right could cause a real nuisance to you. Similarly, a right of way sounds innocent enough, but if it destroys the privacy of your garden it may halve your pleasure and lessen the value of your property into the bargain.

This "amenity" question can be a big one. We fell in love with a small eighteenth-century farmhouse set on a hill with wonderful near, and distant, views. We were on the point of paying the deposit when the sensible senior partner announced he'd better check with the Planning Officer. After that interview we beat a hasty retreat. Permission had been given for the field immediately abutting "our" boundary, and directly in line with the drawing-room windows, to be excavated for brickworks' clay. The tractors and machinery would work till dark during the summer, destroying the near view and the country quiet, and with them, much of the value.

After eight months' search we thought our luck had turned. The little house was well built; the outbuildings substantial; the orchard in full bearing. Then we heard from our solicitors. Did we know that the cottage and garden, but not the rest of the land, were leasehold, not freehold? The ground rent was nominal; the lease, dating back hundreds of years (though the cottage was comparatively modern), still had a hundred or two to run. But we had made our offer for a *freehold*, and any other tenure was not, in our eyes, just as good.

After that, did we give up in despair? Not a bit. We knew that round the corner we should find our ideal, or something near. And the time hadn't been wasted. We are much less ignorant about the country than we were nearly a year ago. We have met some delightful people and discovered how much help and advice there is to be had from everyone from the rating officer to the "ag-exec," if only one troubles to ask for it. We've had reason, too, to be thankful that our path hasn't been too smooth, for every successive place we've tried to buy has seemed more desirable than the last. Did I say tried? We've succeeded! All going well, by the time this appears in print we shall be on the point of moving in. The next thing will be to see about getting those young geese. . . . END

Light On The Subject

(*Continued from page 46*)

spread the light without dimming it at all, but although the filament cannot be seen it makes a searingly bright patch on the surface of the lamp, which must, in consequence, be screened from sight.

When, owing to the design of the shade, the lamp can be seen from some angles, a silica bulb is the wisest choice. The coating of silica on the inside surface of the bulb diffuses the light widely enough to make it gentle and soothing.

The 40-, 60-, 75- and 100-watt bulbs, but not the larger sizes, can be bought with coiled-coil filaments. These give twenty per cent more light and use only the same amount of electricity.

These better-service lamps cost very little more than the others. For instance, the price of a 40-watt single-coil clear or pearl bulb is 1s. 6d.; with a coiled-coil, they come to 1s. 10½d., and the silica to 2s. 2d. Small silica lamps are not made with single coils.

So much for the bulbs, in addition there is a large range of long, thin tubular lamps, both fluorescent and filament. These can be fixed along cornices and picture rails, under pelmets and shelves, and in glass-fronted display cupboards. They can be used to draw attention to good structural features of the room, such as a well-proportioned alcove or a shapely window bay. While their purpose is mainly decorative, they do make a useful addition to the general lighting of the room.

Let us deal with the filament types first. The most practical are the architectural strips, which are about 1½ in. in diameter and obtainable in lengths ranging from 1 to 4 ft. Wattage depends on the length and works out at just under 40-watts per foot. There are also 60-watt curved lamps, made from 20-in. lengths bent into semi-circles, quarter circles and eighths-of-a-circle.

As architectural lamps are made from opal glass, which gives the most perfect diffusion of light possible, it is not necessary to fit shades over them. Consequently they are ideal for fixing around mirror frames or for any position where it is impossible to conceal or screen them. But opal glass does cause an appreciable loss of brightness.

The straight 12-in. architectural lamps cost about 16s. and the 4-ft. about 41s. Curves are 35s. 6d. Much less expensive are the double-ended 30- and 60-watt tubular lamps in pearl or clear glass. They are made in two lengths, roughly 8 and 11 in., and cost about 7s. 6d. each. They do much the same work as architectural strips, but as they must be completely screened from sight the best place for them is under pelmets and shelves.

Filament lamps become hot in action, so when they are installed in small unventilated spaces there is a possibility of their scorching their surroundings unless special precautions are taken. Fluorescent strips do not cause this bother.

FLUORESCENT strips are not a source of glare because their light is distributed evenly over the entire surface of the lamps. Nor do they cast very definite shadows.

In fact when fixed to a ceiling they can be arranged so that they throw practically no shadow at all. While this is an advantage in kitchens, where working spaces and cookers left in semi-darkness may lead to scalds and cuts, it is not an unmixed blessing elsewhere in the house. Lack of shadows makes a familiar room seem flat, but when fluorescent strips are incorporated in concealed lighting schemes they are most decorative and economical.

To compensate for their higher cost, they last longer than filament lamps. While it is impossible to guarantee the life of any electric lamp, because an undetectable flaw or an unfortunate chance may shorten its allotted span, on an average a filament can be expected to burn for 1,000 hours and a fluorescent for 5,000.

Until a year ago, installing fluorescent lamps was rather a costly business. Each one had to be fitted with an expensive control mechanism. Recently this type of lighting has come within reach of the modest budget, because 40-watt lamps can be coupled with a half-crown 65-watt filament lamp which does the work formerly accomplished by the choke mechanism.

Whatever lighting scheme you evolve for your home, you are sure to find just the right electric lamp for it—at the right price.

END

Budget To Buy More

(*Continued from page 42*)

On a smaller scale, a housewife, amazed at how much she is spending on bought cakes, decides to make her own, and to put chicken on the menu more frequently. A girl in her first job, decides to save fares by cycling to work, and to collect gramophone records.

When you have decided how you can prune your spending the next step is to budget. You can choose your period : it can be a year, or it can be a month. Some of the items on which you will have to spend will not necessarily have occurred in the accounting you have done. But you can estimate what you spent on them last year, and allow accordingly.

Keeping to a budget requires a little strength of mind. But whether you do or not, depends upon the standards you set yourself. They should not be more severe than you can manage. The worst possible thing is to make a burden of account keeping and budgeting. Allow yourself your extravagances and weaknesses.

Plotting the course can and should be fun. With such planning you get the best value out of your income.

END

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Is your skin a little dry and rough after the Summer? Is there a hint of puffiness or slack contours? Do you want to look particularly lovely for a party? Then smooth on this creamiest of masques, and as you rest or bathe you can actually feel the gentle uplifting action, stimulating the circulation, clearing the skin, strengthening and bracing flabby contours. After twenty minutes wash off the masque with cool water. Notice how smooth your face is, how young it feels, and how radiant you look. Velva Cream Masque, tube or jar 17/3

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Midges And Mirages (*Continued from page* 13)

exhilarating about it. The country is as flat as a billiard table, chequered with marshes and populated by every kind of water-fowl. There are flamingos, egrets and herons. The distances are incredibly deceptive, so that a house five miles away seems able to be reached in five minutes. Eventually I saw the lighthouse and walked wearily on towards it. Immediately a dog ran out at me. "Look out for the dog," screamed the voice of the Tessins' daughter-in-law from a window. It was an unnecessary warning. I stood still, and tried to look casual. The dog was called off, and I entered the house. It was really palatial. Something like a villa, with a large kitchen and clean, bright rooms.

"We choose to keep lighthouses because of the housing crisis," explained Tessin junior. "It is a solitary existence, but we consider ourselves lucky." "Do you get lonely?" I asked his wife. "Not so much now," she replied. "It took me some time to get used to the mirages. They made everything unreal. You see, I come from the North." I knew that she was not the old Tessins' favourite daughter-in-law. To them people from the North were pernickety and ungenerous. They didn't laugh much and they hardly ever shouted. "And the midges are ghastly. All the insects are insupportable. Today, there are neither midges nor mirages because of the mistral blowing. And the mistral is insupportable too."

The next day I borrowed the grocer's bicycle and went to see the other lighthouse, which was ten miles farther on than the Gauchole. The mistral was blowing less, and it was hotter. Soon I could see the white finger of the first lighthouse in the distance, and the bounding sea on my right. I felt warm and decided to go for a swim, propped my bicycle up on a thorn bush and set out for the sea. The solitude was immense, unearthly, forever unpeopled. There was only a white, wild visitation of birds which made the land still more inhuman. I took off my shirt and shorts and ran to the sea. But the sea was not there. I was in a world of boundless fantasy, in the middle of a desert. Behind me, where I had left my bicycle, the sea foamed on to the sand and lapped against the walls of the lighthouse. In the other direction there were lakes with trees in the middle of them, and with a shock of wonder, I saw the far-off town of Les-Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer raised up in the air like a pink soufflé, like a vision of Petra, the rose-red city.

As I walked back to my clothes, the midges started, helped by occasional gadflies and an assortment of small, enthusiastic beetles who appreciated the flesh of English pilgrims to gipsy festivals. But I felt happy. The Camargue claimed me, and I felt one with its enormous sky, and its wild, detached birds. I dressed, and set off for the other lighthouse, going farther and farther into a more primitive solitude, where hardly anything could be seen but sand, marsh and a trembling infinity of mirages. Once or twice I met fishermen, and they shouted at me, "First to the right, past the mirage. . . ."

When I returned, I found the real sea beside the road and had a swim. As I came out of it, I saw a figure farther up the shore plunging a net into the water and depositing objects into a sack. The figure had a wispy beard. Was this a mirage? But I recognized the Dutchman, and he was so exhilarated, that he actually shouted at me. "I am making a fortune selling shell-fish to the tourists," he cried. "This is my vocation." And, although he didn't quite seem to fit into the rich desolation of the Camargue, I admired his effort, and envied him. A writer is half of this world, and only pure in his dreams. We sat on the sand, and while he washed his shell-fish, we began to talk about Graham Greene.

END

The Career Of The Brolly (*Continued from page* 39)

merciless mocking of gentlemen, he walked about London parading his open brolly. That was about 1750, and Hanway persisted in it for over thirty years until his death.

In time, the mocking died away: the mockers still got wet, but Hanway, his umbrella held over his wig, remained dry. What started as a daring innovation by one brave man became a popular vogue. Umbrellas had arrived. At first, there was violent opposition from the sedan-chair men and the hackney coachmen, who feared that if people could keep off the rain with these weird things, they might fall out of work. But theirs was but the typical misguided opposition that greets every advance, and soon the "parapluyes," as they were originally called, were to be seen everywhere. And this was before the eighteenth century was out.

Two single incidents show how quickly brollies caught the public favour. In 1758, when a certain Dr. Shebbeare was placed in the stocks, he instructed a servant to stand by holding an umbrella over him to keep off sun or rain. By 1780, London umbrella-makers were taking out patents for them: the second being for an umbrella with a jointed handle that opened by the touch of a spring.

There have been a good many advances in umbrella design since then. Among the latest ideas are detachable, flexible umbrella-covers that can be slipped over the ribs in a jiffy, and are cheap enough to be thrown away when damaged; umbrella harness for overladen shoppers, enabling them to have the protection without holding the awkward thing; umbrella bicycles, with a permanent fitment for a brolly over the rider that keeps off the sun as well; a metal container fitted inside cars to catch the water from wet umbrellas taken down by passengers, even umbrella "lending libraries" which hire out brollies at a small daily fee!

Dickens made the umbrella a "gamp," with his immortal character Sairey Gamp, the primitive old nurse who possessed an allegedly gouty brolly, but in France the everyday slang term for one is, strangely enough, "un Robinson," after the big shade made by Robinson Crusoe! Soon after the introduction of the term "gamp," the umbrella came to be regarded as an object of mild ridicule, or at least something humorous.

This notion was fostered by the old-time music-hall comedians, who quickly took a seedy brolly, usually broken or half-collapsed, as an infallibly amusing stage prop. This was all very well, but it affected the public opinion of these useful devices, and a touch of the former effeminacy slipped back again.

Thanks primarily to Queen Mary, who was inseparable from her parasol or umbrella, and also Mr. Chamberlain when Prime Minister, whose gamp was his trademark beloved of political cartoonists, accompanying him even into Hitler's lair, the umbrella regained all its popularity, and now seems sure of a permanent place in civilized life.

But not everyone appreciates the brolly's place in the scheme of things. Certain stoical French peasants object to umbrellas. "God sends the rain," they say, "and expects man to get wet by it."

END

She Banished The Railway Bun (*Continued from page* 21)

meanwhile, they do very nicely. Menus vary according to the judgment and taste of the manager in charge. Everything is competitively priced (2s. for fish and chips; cheese salad 1s. 6d.; a generous slice of mince tart 9d.) and ticketed—particularly helpful in these days when most of us must watch our budget. One thing that appealed to me was the imaginative selection of drinks. Egg and milk and a sparkling glucose beverage designed to give quick energy seem the answer for the traveller with the need, but no time to stop, for a square meal. Incidentally, there's drinking water at a help-yourself faucet for everyone who wishes it.

That the public like the new cafeteria, which have already appeared at Crewe, Liverpool, Manchester, Bristol and elsewhere in the provinces as well as in London, is proved by the increase in sales. At Victoria, within a few weeks of opening, takings were *ten times* as great.

Although cafeteria are the obvious answer where speed is all important (the twenty thousand cups of tea sold on a Bank Holiday Saturday before twelve noon at one buffet illustrate the kind of pressure experienced) they are not the only new development. For example, opposite the Continental Arrivals platform at Victoria the "Golden Arrow Bar" invites you to "Continental Breakfast; Morning Coffee." Later on, afternoon teas, drinks and light snacks are served. The red leather chairs look invitingly comfortable; the tables are widely spaced; the service deft—and the specially selected staff of twenty can between them muster ten languages.

Outside on the station concourse stands "Elmer," the answer to prayer of the hurried but hungry traveller who has no time for even the briefest visit to a refreshment room. Elmer sells packed meals, cheese and biscuits, cakes, sweets, cigarettes and cartons of soft drinks. Each item is displayed in a miniature shop window, numbered and priced. You make your choice, insert the appropriate sum, push a button for each item, read the "wait and proceed" instructions that light up, and take your goods! Great fun, and really efficient. Elmer hails from Australia and was introduced into this country by the Hotels Executive. Now his brothers are appearing at stations wherever there is a need. Along with the gleaming new platform trolleys and mobile motor buffets that can be sent wherever a sudden rush is anticipated—they show the sales sense and drive behind "railways refreshments" today.

"Yes, we're getting along, but there's a lot to do yet. Give us a couple of years," smiled Mrs. Gasking. All through the interview she had stressed that railway catering is a team job and that she feels privileged to work with keen, loyal people who, from the top down, are conscious of their responsibilities to the travelling public. As I turned for a last look at the attractive figure in the exquisitely simple grey dress, the tailored crispness softened by a double row of grey and white pearls, diamond stud ear-rings and an artlessly pinned clove carnation, I thought that her achievements are as much due to her feminine flair for people as to her business know-how. May she go on from strength to strength! British nationalised industry can use her brand of brilliance.

END

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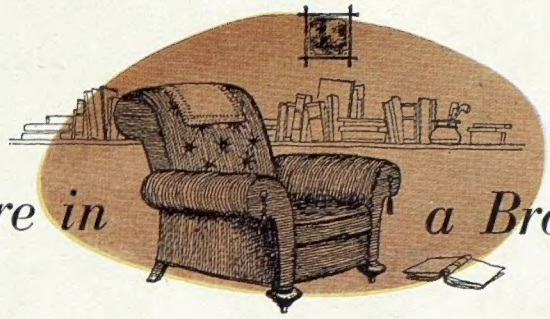

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